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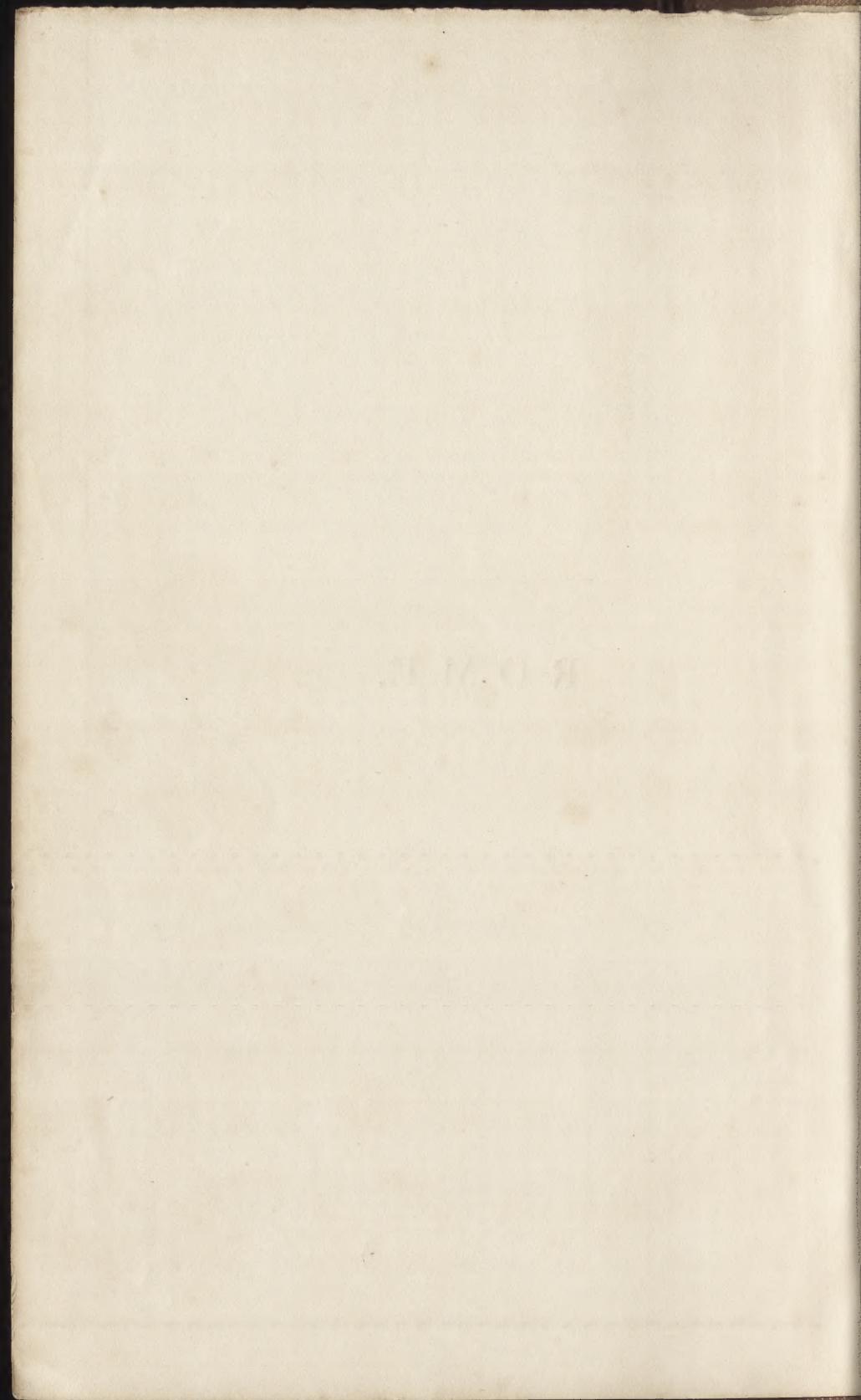
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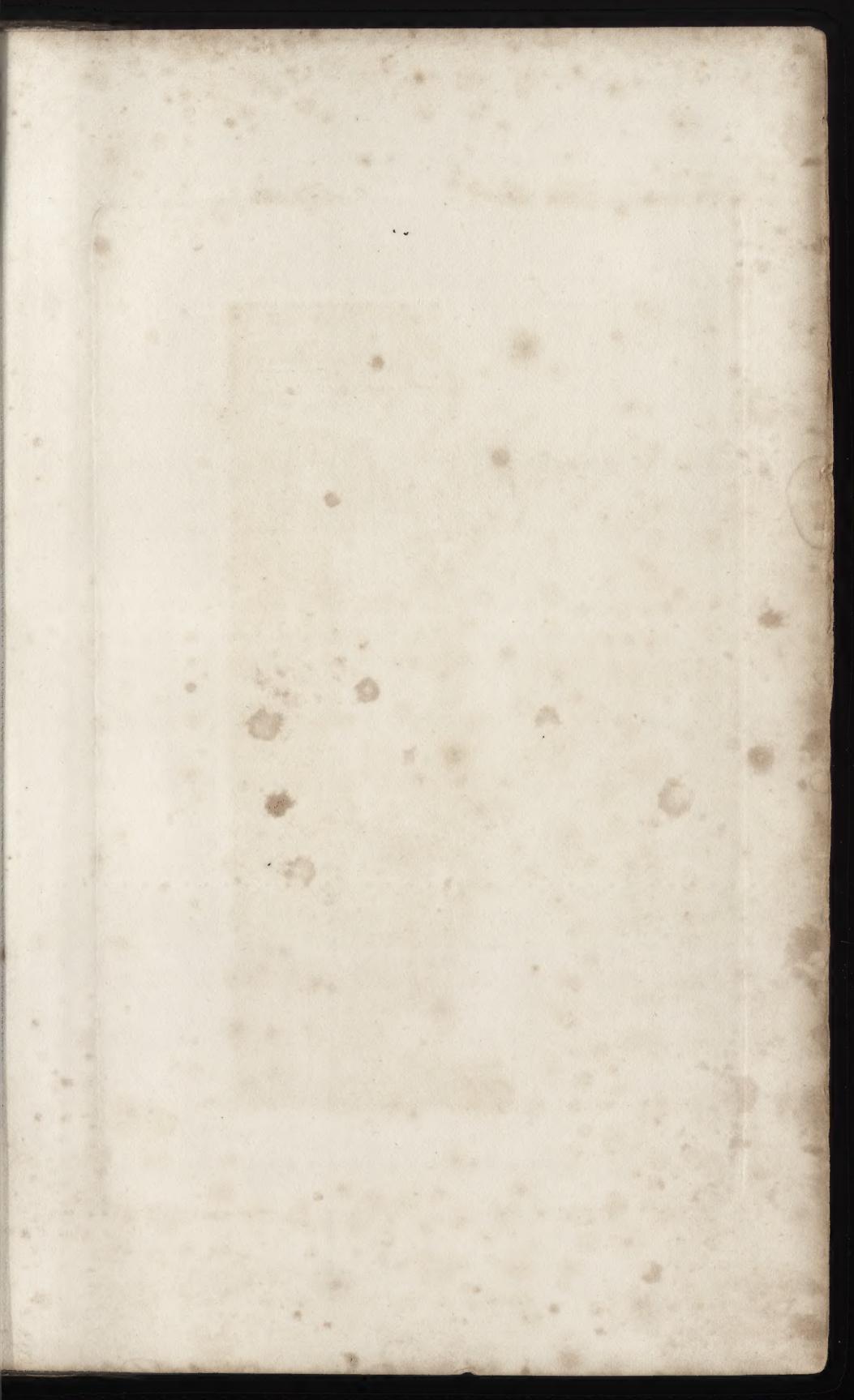
2 Vols

59.-

R O M E.

b







THE FORUM AT ROME.

ENG'D BY BRADY

AS RESTORED BY C. R. COCHRELL ESQ. ARA

ROME,

AS IT WAS

UNDER PAGANISM,

AND AS IT BECAME

UNDER THE POPES.

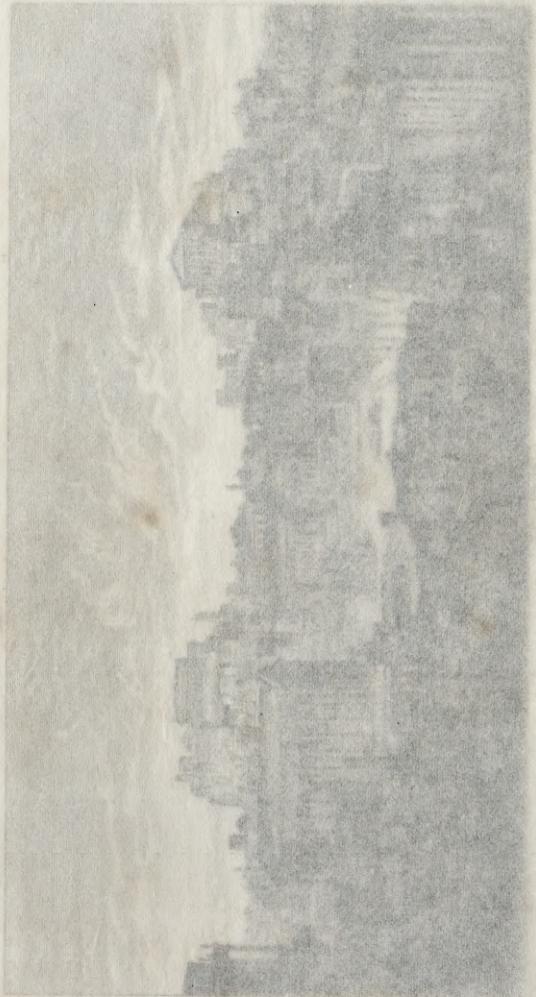
"Ages and realms are crowded in this span."

VOL. I.

LONDON:

J. MADDEN AND CO., LEADENHALL STREET.

MDCCXLIII.



THE FOUNDATION ROOMS.

AS RESTORED BY S. WILSON IN 1808.

R O M E,

AS IT WAS

U N D E R P A G A N I S M,

AND AS IT BECAME

U N D E R T H E P O P E S.

"Ages and realms are crowded in this span."

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TYLER & REED,
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P R E F A C E.

ON the banks of the Tiber, and in the midst of a vast solitude strewed with the ruins of aqueducts and tombs, there is a region, of about twelve miles' circuit, encompassed by walls that are obviously done with sieges.

These walls are lofty ; through their gates the tide of conquest has often poured forth, often rolled back through them again, bearing upon its wave the spoils of triumph : they are fortified with bastions and towers, but evidently they have felt the shocks of twenty centuries ; and, withal, they are garrisoned *now*, only by recollections. Studded, here and there, with broken inscriptions and divers monumental fragments ; garlanded with wild flowers, with grass, parasitical herbs, and precarious shrubs, they resemble, not so much the bulwarks of a fortress, as the precinct of some holy place,—a fence to guard the ashes of saint and hero from being scattered or confounded with ignoble clay.

The region thus encompassed is, in part, occupied by a city, singularly beautiful and magnificent, seated, for the most part, upon the Campus Martius, and on the Vatican fields beyond the Tiber ; the rest,—far the greater portion,—is “a marble wilderness,”—scattered with—

“—— the chief relics of almighty Rome.”*

* Pray glance at the map prefixed to this volume ; observe the relative situation and extent of the inhabited and deserted regions

Of this latter district of the enclosure, the stillness is seldom interrupted, except by some melancholy sound: at night by,

“—— from out the Cæsars’ palace,
The owl’s long cry,—”

the howl of the watch-dog, or, haply, some catches of psalmody from monks, in chanting their nocturnal prayer: the vine-dresser’s song, by day, may sound less drearily; yet is it also a solemn chant, and chimes not inaptly with the tolling of the “Angelus” at noon, and the “Ave Maria” bell at evening. A mean osteria, perhaps, by the way-side, with wild shepherds and herdsmen of the campagna refreshing their animals at a pool or a fountain, or regaling themselves with a flask or a siesta in the cypress shade; a cassino or a monastery here and there, among the solitudes, with barricadoed doors and casements; a gardener’s hut, or a hermit’s cell, patched into the sanctuary of a temple, or the alcove of a bath, a theatre, or a banquet hall;—these, the only symptoms of animation to be met with, do not relieve, but rather enhance, by the contrast of so much meanness with so much of fallen grandeur, the indescribable desolation of the scenery. The very ruins of palace, amphitheatre, and triumphal arch, seem to exalt themselves higher in sullen haughtiness, and to regard with unutterable indignation those vile intruders upon the cemetery of heroism and empire which they guard.

The writer of the following pages, (whoever he may have been,) seems to have aimed at giving a vivid idea of the revolution, by which the Rome of the Cæsars was reduced to this prostrate state, and in which the Rome of the Popes had its beginning.

With this view, he labours not only, “to fill up, as

'twere anew, the gaps of centuries," but, completely to rebuild the imperial city ; to restore the Palatine, the trophies and temples of the Forum, the Capitol, and the Campus Martius ; to re-open the Thermæ, the Amphitheatre, and the Circus ; to repair the aqueducts, replenish a thousand glorious fountains with their limpid treasures ; not only to replace the furniture and priceless embellishments of the palaces, and rebuild the altars of the "immortal gods," but to throng the Appian and Flaminian way with the concourse of the nations, and awake, from the sleep of centuries, the Roman people and the senate, with

The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.—

In the first and second books, the reader is in Rome, from the second year of Claudius to the close of the first persecution, in the reign of Nero : the plot requires a temporary visit to the Brighton of antiquity—Baiæ, and the beauteous shores of Neapolis.

The third book opens with the spectacle of this brilliant mirage of existence reduced to irremediable desolation,—just as it was beheld by Belisarius, the great captain of Justinian, when he visited the place where Rome had stood, forty days after the departure of Totila, the Goth, who had levelled the walls, consumed by fire, or otherwise destroyed, almost every thing that still remained erect after a tremendous succession of disasters, and dragged away into captivity the miserable remnant of the senate and the once kingly people ;—"nothing human," says the historian, "did he suffer to remain behind, but only wild beasts and birds of prey."

But as the series of events, through which the strong-hold of the outlaw, Romulus, attained to the

headship of the world, was made to pass before the reader, by the development of the plot in the first and second books, in the third book, and the following, to the end of the fifth, he is made to witness the decline, fall, and utter destruction of the seven-hilled city, and of the Roman empire of the West.

The fourth book opens with the triumph of the Labarum, or standard of the Cross, borne by Constantine and his legions through the heart of the pagan city, and planted on the Capitol. Scenes from the persecutions follow; for this and the following book are the retrospects of Belisarius, who naturally reverts from the scenes of desolation around him, to the causes and the combination of disasters by which they were brought about. In the opening of the fifth book, all Rome is in the Coliseum, and the gladiators are on the arena, when Telemachus, the Greek monk, rushes between the combatants, and is stoned by the spectators to death. Meanwhile, two barbarian kings, Alaric, an Arian, and the heathen Radogast, are both descending upon the city. The world is in suspense as to which of the two it shall fall; and midst the awful pause, the voice of St. Jerome, from his cell at Bethlehem, is made to resound through the golden palaces, warning many to fly from the wrath that is impending. The Gothic sieges, famine, humiliation of the Romans, follow: the surprise of the ancient queen of empire, at dead of night;—wonderful procession of Goths and Christians bearing sacred vessels of immense price to the temple of St. Peter, amidst the conflagration, pillage, and horrible scenes of outrage and massacre on every side;—Attila turned back by Leo the Great;—Rome taken and plundered by the Vandals under Genzeric, by the Herulians under Odoacer, by Theodoric;—recovered from the Ostro-

gōths by Belisarius, and defended during a protracted siege ;—devastation of Italy ;—hideous famine ;—other sieges of Rome ;—direful sufferings of its unfortunate inhabitants ;—from their walls they see Belisarius defeated in his attempt to bring them succour ;—city surprised, for the last time, by the Ostrogoths under Totila, at dead of night ;—again left a desert ;—St. Benedict, with a procession of his monks, comes along the Via Sacra, as Belisarius is rising to depart from the ruins of the temple of Fortune, where he had been seated ; and his interview with St. Benedict closes the fifth book.

The sixth opens with a scene in the pilgrims' hospice at Canterbury, and a general view of Christendom, as it was in the year of our Lord 800. A letter from Eginard, the secretary of Charlemagne, to Alcuin, the friend and preceptor of both, brings the reader, first, to the banks of the Rhine, when the pope, Leo III., set sail from Cologne to Werda, with King Charles, and their united courts, in order to canonize St. Switbert, an Anglo-Saxon missioner of the preceding age ; and, finally, to Rome, once more, to assist at the crowning of Charlemagne on Christmas day, A.D. 800, which was the birthday of modern Europe. The donation of Pepin Le Bref to St. Peter, renewed and augmented on that occasion by Charlemagne, gives rise to an inquiry which involves the origin and progress of “Rome as it became under the Popes.”

The materials of all this have been arranged and cast together under the auspices of imagination ; but they are, nevertheless, selected from genuine and authentic sources. Indeed the general aspect of the work, from being so much made up of fragments, reminds one not a little of the “*opus tumultuarium*”

of Belisarius, who seized upon whatever came next to hand,—whether column, statue, entablature, or altar, in his hurry to repair the walls which he had to defend against the impending assault of the barbarians. Gibbon and Tacitus, Sallust and Sismondi, Arringhi, Strabo, and Sir William Gell, Plato and Paley, Marcus Tullius and Dr. Warburton, Seneca and Sewell, Machiavelli and Polybius, Virgilius Maro and Thomas Moore, Hobhouse and Pistolesi, Annaeus Florus and Dr. Lingard, Pliny the Elder and Pliny the Younger, are laid under contribution, indiscriminately: Jews and Gentiles, Greeks, Romans, and barbarians, moderns as well as ancients, writers on civil not less than on ecclesiastical history, are pressed into this service; St. Jerome is as little spared as Procopius; Guizot, Dunham, Denina, Schlegel, Lebeau, and Giannone, much less than Eusebius, St. Gregory the Great, Muratori, the *Acta Sanctorum*, or the Cardinals Baronius and Orsi. Each, however, gets credit for the quota he contributes; there are not only references, sufficiently copious, even for matters of trivial import, and for details, but generally speaking, the foot notes will be found to contain, *in extenso*, the more important authorities.

These precautions may be open to the reproach of pedantry; but they were not, perhaps, superfluous. In perusing the description of historic scenes and incidents, the like of which, for dramatic interest, have been seldom realized even by poetic fancy, not a few readers might have been tempted, had this precaution been neglected, to exclaim: “Very fine, very wonderful, indeed: what a pity it is fabulous;” while others, of a severer turn, might have even felt indignant at seeing certain topics treated of in these volumes exhibited under the guise of fiction. Besides, within

the entire circuit of the walls of Rome, there was not a palm of space unoccupied: not only had every thing connected with the history, the manners, customs, the public and private economy of the Romans, been illustrated, discussed, and set before the world in every imaginable form; but every paving-stone and brick-bat of the Eternal City had been written and rewritten on, interlined, noted, and scribbled over, worse than the most perplexing of Cardinal Mai's palimpsests. Hence, the Author of *Anacharsis the Younger* said, that the very stones in Rome were more learned than the wits in other countries. In fine, this plan has the no small, and not-by-any-means-to-be-despised advantage, that it leaves readers greatly at liberty to think, and draw conclusions for themselves.

In no instance is any character taken out of his own age, or made to utter sentiments that have not been attributed to his times. The persons of the drama are all historical: the style of grouping is not so. Quite the reverse. Those who are only dimly visible in the pagan writers, or are altogether lost in the shade, are brought into the fore-ground, and get their share of the light in *this* history of Rome. Not that the old classic worthies are dislodged, or thrust into the back-ground. From Romulus to Augustus, and from him to Romulus Augustulus, they are left in their prescriptive positions; but characters of a new order are placed in juxtaposition with them; and obscure as they may have been in their lifetime, when the results of their enterprises and their sacrifices are considered, neither the philosophy nor the taste of their descendants in religion will be shocked, at seeing as much importance attached to a tent-maker and a fisherman, as to their contemporaries who wore the

purple: to see as large a space assigned to the exploits of the martyrs as of the ancient patriots, and not less stress laid upon a mission for the conversion of a people, than upon brilliant campaigns for their subjugation.

As to the plot itself, it is simply that of history, developed amply and accurately in the more important scenes, with some slight imaginative embellishments;—not calculated, it is hoped, and certainly not intended, in any instance, to lead the intellect astray. “In this period of the world,” says Frederic Schlegel, “in this decisive crisis between ancient and modern times, in this great central point of history, stood two powers opposed to each other: on one hand, we behold the Roman emperors, the earthly gods and absolute masters of the world, in all the pomp and splendour of ancient paganism—standing, as it were, on the very summit and verge of the old world, now tottering to its ruin;—and, on the other hand, we trace the obscure rise of an almost imperceptible point of light, from which the whole modern world was to spring, and whose further progress and full development, through all succeeding ages, constitute the true purport of *modern history*.”* It is in the collision of these two principles, in the deadly conflict between paganism and Christianity, of which the seven-hilled city was the principal arena, that the dramatic interest of the plot must be looked for: its denouement, in the overthrow of the one, and the triumph of the other, upon the same scene.

If it be asked who is the hero, or can there be one, seeing that the action extends over the lifetime not of an individual, but of an empire?—the story may

* Philos. of Hist., Robertson’s Transl.

be said to have a hero, in St. Peter. He is as vividly present, speaking still historically, in the last as in the first act ; as influential in the resurrection of the empire of the West, in the baptism of modern Europe, when Charlemagne was proclaimed emperor before his shrine, as he is represented to have been, when he entered the palace of Lateranus, or raised the son of the patrician from the dead ; is as sensibly recognised in the interview of Leo and Attila, in the correspondence of Pope Stephen and King Pepin, as he is supposed to have been when he crossed the Roman Forum with the senator Pudens, or stood on the Tarpeian tower, admiring the imperial city, and disputing with Seneca, Lucan, Petus Thrasea, and the other leading men of the time, concerning its future destinies.

Absorbed, as they usually are, in the palpable attachments and agonizing interests of the present, to the far greater number, it is to be feared, that a peregrination back over so many centuries, and into a world so different from that which they are enjoying, may turn out to be anything but inviting ; yet, we read, that, sometimes, migrations very similar to this, are not unusual even amongst the votaries of Epicurus ; and the renovated zest with which they come home to every civilized luxury and refinement, more than requites them, it is said, for their hardships and privations in the wilderness. Perhaps, too, it may gratify curiosity,—even incidentally contribute to improvement,—to contrast the order of things in which we live, with another order of existence, highly polished, though very different from our own, and which, withal, has not only left some august vestiges of its transit, along the Tiber and over three quarters of the globe ; but which has made an indelible impression on the

institutions, the language, the enthusiasm, and the memory of mankind.

A den of robbers graduating steadily into the political headship of all the most polished nations of antiquity ; diffusing the arts of civilization over all the barbarous countries it subdued ; and then, by a series of unparalleled calamities, brought down to utter destruction,—this, even in the abstract, cannot be regarded as a subject altogether devoid of interest ; but it becomes of the last historical importance, when considered, as it must be, in connexion with the origin, the rise, and domination of a new Roman empire, which still continues, after the lapse of so many ages, not only to attract the notice of the inquisitive, but to keep whole nations and empires in agitation.

What has been here said, by way of preface, may be concluded by a kind of motto, inscribed in the handwriting of the author, upon a fly-leaf of his manuscript. It is a text from *Livy*, in which he anticipates no small recompense of his labours in writing his history, that they would abstract his thoughts, even at intervals, from the turmoil and miseries of the times in which he lived, to a serene and ennobling intercourse with the past. “ *Ego contra hoc quoque laboris præmium petam, ut me conspectu malorum, quæ nostra tot per annos vidit ætas, tantisper certe dum prisca illa totâ mente repeto, avertam : omnis expers curæ, quæ scribentis animum, etsi non flectere a vero, solicitum tamen efficere potest.* ”*

* In *Præf.*

BOOK I.

“To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if endeavoured, and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses—whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.”—*Dr. Johnson.*

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Not Imaged



PLAN OF
ANCIENT ROME.
BY
W. B. CLARKE, A.R.C.A.

London Published by Chapman & Hall 96 Strand

R O M E.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

“ Jampridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes.”

Juvenal, Sat. iii.

“ What conflux issuing forth or entering in !

Lo ! embassies from regions far remote,
In various habits, on the Appian road.”

Milton.

ON the fifteenth of the calends of February, in the year from the building of the city DCCXCVI., Claudius Augustus, for the third, and Lucius Vitellius, for the second time, being consuls, there entered the gates of Rome two lowly wayfarers from Palestine.*

They might have passed for father and son, if one attended solely to their years ; but, from the contour and deportment of the younger of them, in whom the gravity of manhood was still blended with the modest gracefulness of youth, it was easy to discern, that no tie of earthly kindred united him to the venerable man by whose side he walked with the reverential air of a disciple.

Three score years and upwards seemed to have passed over the old man’s head. It was bald, or shorn upon

* According to Dionysius Hal., Varro, and Plutarch, Rome was founded in the 23rd or 24th year of the 1st Olympiad, which is supposed to coincide with the year of the world 3228, B.C. 776 ; but Cicero, on the authority of the Greeks, fixes the era in the 2nd year of the 7th Olympiad. “ Nam si, id quod Græcorum investigatur annalibus, Roma condita est secundo anno Olympiadis Septumæ, in id sæculum Romuli cecidit ætas cum jam plena Græcia poëtarum et musicorum esset.”—*M. T. Ciceronis, de Repub. l. ii. tom. i. p. 152, of Cardinal Mai’s Palimpsests.*

the crown, and encircled by a fillet, or wreath of hair, like to that of his beard, which was not white or flowing, but crispy, and of a silvery gray. His brow was elevated, as if in lofty thought. His cheeks were furrowed with contrition. His whole aspect was pale, and of an expression that imparted a certain air of dignity to a person rather less than the middle size. His eye—vivid as the lightning of heaven—indicated an impetuous spirit, but its glance was tempered by humility. A reed, terminating in a cross, was his only staff; and even that he seemed to carry rather as an emblem of his mission, than to alleviate his pilgrimage, or sustain the infirmity of his years. About him there was an air of mystery that confounded the conjecture it excited. He looked like an ambassador, the agent of some mighty enterprise,—yet who more destitute of every thing that is wont to distinguish the representative of a terrestrial potentate? Unheralded, and unadorned by pomp,—jaded and travel-stained, he journeyed on with his meek companion—barefooted and in silence. If heeded, it was to be scoffed at, or eyed with contempt, by the proud and gorgeous multitudes thronging to the metropolis of all nations.

Embassies vieing with each other in the costliness and singularity of their gifts, and in the splendour of their retinues—envoys, even from the climes of India the most remote,*

“Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreathed,
astrologers from Chaldea, merchants and magicians,
priests and sorcerers from Egypt, Asiatic monarchs
upon elephants caparisoned with jewellery and gold,
Moorish kings and Parthian satraps, with squadrons

* “Nam et Scythæ misere legatos, et Sarmatæ, amicitiam petentes. Seres etiam, habitantesque sub ipso sole Indi, cum gemmis, et margaritis, elephantesque inter munera trahentes, nihil magis quam longinquitatem viæ imputabant, quam quadriennio impleverant: et tamen ipse hominum color ab alio venire cœlo fatebatur. Parthi quoque,” &c.—*L. Annæi Flori, Rer. Rom. l. iv. 12.*

of wild horsemen from beyond the Hysdaspes and Mount Atlas ;

“ Praetors, pro-consuls to their provinces
Hastening, or on return in robes of state,
Lictors with rods, the ensigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings ;”

men of all colours, and costumes, and degrees of civilization, from the Ethiop, the Arab, and the Sarmatian, to the Attic Greek—the pomp, the chivalry, and stately religion of the whole Roman world, seemed to be grouped together, and interwoven in that concourse, (brilliant and interminable as the march of Xerxes,) as it moved along the Appian way, like an august procession, bearing the tributes and the offerings of all people to the queen of empire, and the domicile of all the gods.*

Tombs, and stately mausoleums, adorned with precious marbles, with statuary, and elegiac inscriptions, lined the great thoroughfare, on either side, for many a mile before it passed under the city gate ;† and as if Death had come out to welcome the myriads hastening to his carnival, the brave, the gay, and the ambitious, in pressing forward were encountered by the funeral processions, which issued forth towards the suburbs in all the ostentatious circumstance of mourning.‡

* “ Ἐπιτομὴ τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας.”—*Theophilus.*

† “ Omnis civitas, omne castellum ante ingressum sepulchra habet, ut contendens intrare in civitatem, quæ imperat, et plaret divitiis et potentatu, aliquis dignitatibus; priusquam videt quod secum concipit, videat primum quod sit ante portat: sunt sepulchra utique ante oculos, est nostra humilitatis schola, et docemur in quod desinamus tandem.”—*S. Chrys. Serm. de Fid. et Leg.*

‡ The sepulchres occupying the sides of the public ways varied in magnificence, according to the taste or spirit and affluence of the patron, by whom they were considered as the last home after this life; the only property which did not descend to, and was not liable to be squandered by the extravagant heir. Their beauty and interest were increased, not more from the taste or want of it displayed in the architectural and the picturesque groups they combined, than from the inscriptions they presented, which were oftentimes as instructive as the style and diction were varying. If the traveller obeyed their invitation, “ Siste viator,” he might pause to smile at

To this custom of honouring excellence even after life, the historian Polybius refers, in a great measure, the cause of the higher qualities and superiority of the Romans of his own times over their enemies ; “ for,” says he, “ this public institution excites the emulation of the rising as well as the existing generation. When a man whose life has been worthy of imitation departs this world, his remains are still respected ; and amongst the honours rendered, his corpse, borne to the forum, is there placed at the rostrum, so that it may be conspicuous, when the surrounding multitude are addressed by his son or nearest relative, who, ascending the rostrum, panegyrizes his good qualities, and enumerates the various exploits he has done to the advancement of the interests or glory of his country ; the memorable actions of his life are extolled,—events in which, most probably, many present have borne a more or less distinguished share, or taken a particular interest ; thus the praise bestowed upon the deceased becomes identified with their own, their finest feelings are awakened, and the loss of an individual becomes a source of public sorrow and sympathy.

“ With the accustomed ceremonies consigned to the tomb, he is not forgotten ; his enshrined image, the features and even complexion most accurately expressed, is placed in some conspicuous part of the dwelling he inhabited ; on solemn occasions it is adorned and disclosed. When any of his posterity, after rendering themselves eminent, close the last scene of life, these busts are again brought forth ; and, that the representation may be in all respects complete,

the last lingering of human vanity, or contemplate the scanty notices of those who had successively contributed by their courage and talents to support in difficulty the state, or enlarge the empire, until its limits were unknown. Indignation might be excited at the sumptuous monument of the barber of Augustus, or freedman of Claudius, while Pompey or Cato had little or no memorial to mark the place where their mortal remains were deposited.

“ *Mormoreo Licinius tumulo jacet ab Cato parvo ; Pompeius nullo. Credimus esse Deos ?*”—*Martial.*
Gell's Pompeiana, vol. i, p. 73.

clothed in the embroidered robes of the several dignities they had attained, and preceded by the appropriate insignia of the various offices they had respectively held, are in chariots drawn in solemn procession. Arrived at the forum, the same curule chairs receive them with which when alive they were privileged. The orator, when the exhausted virtues of the recently deceased no longer afford him subject for eulogy, turns to those whose venerable likenesses recall to his imagination the celebrated deeds and various exploits they had performed, and which led to the honours by which they had been distinguished ; he shows that, animated by the example of his predecessors, each in succession proved himself not unworthy his ancestors, and thus in the minds of their descendants infuses the hope of obtaining honourable fame, by the performance of every great and worthy action ; for what spectacle can be more imposing, and who can without emotion behold the living, breathing likenesses of those whose prudence and skill, in the ardour of victory, only sought opportunity for magnanimity, and whose courage, undeterred by adverse fortune, in the ignominy of defeat only found new occasions for its display ?”*

First in the sad procession went musicians of various kinds ; pipers, trumpeters, and players upon a long flute that made a grave and dismal sound ; then mourning women, called ‘*præficæ*,’ rehearsing the praises of the dead in a wild dirge, or rhapsody, which they chanted like so many priestesses of grief. Next came buffoons and pantomimes, who danced and sung ; one of them, called the arch-mimic, imitating the gesture and expressions, and in every respect supporting the character, of the deceased. Then followed his freedmen, wearing caps in token of their liberty —they, like the rest, bearing lighted torches, called ‘*funales*,’ from being made of twisted hemp. Immediately before the corpse, borne upon a *lectica*, or couch, decorated, were carried in chariots or on couches the images of the deceased and of his an-

* See Gell’s *Pompeiana*, vol. i. p. 87.

cestors, in the same complexion and garb as when alive ; so that each one's remains seemed to be conducted, by the long line of his progenitors, to the tomb.

If the deceased had distinguished himself in war, the crowns and rewards which he had received for his valour were displayed, together with the spoils and standards he had won in battle. The 'fasces' and the curule chair were borne before the magistrate ; the conqueror was preceded by his war-horse, his triumphal chariot, the representations of the provinces he had subdued, and of the cities he had taken. Behind the bier walked the friends of the deceased, clad in mourning ; his sons with their heads veiled, his daughters with their hair dishevelled, magistrates without their badges, the nobility without their ornaments ; and a long line of clients and domestics usually closed the funeral.*

* We find an ancient law of the Thebans ordained that no man should build a house, without therein providing a proper burial place for the family ; and a similar custom was observed among the early Romans, whose dead were deposited within their dwellings, (doliis aut vasculis) in coffins of a triangular prismatic shape, made of three large rectangular tiles, until the law of the twelve tables forbade any corpse being either interred or burnt within the city.

"Hominem mortuum in urbe ne spelito neve urito."—*Cicero.*

"Sylla, the dictator, was the first of his line whose body was burned. He thus ordered it, lest his bones, after his death, should be treated with indignity. The custom of burning the dead fell into disuse about the 4th century."—*Vid. Plin. Hist. Nat. I. vii. 55.*

CHAPTER II.

“ Where the bower and tomb
Stand side by side, and Pleasure learns from Death
The instant value of each moment’s breath.”

Moore’s Alciphron.

As the pilgrims moved slowly onward through the double range of sepulchres, there was no vicissitude or incident connected with the burial of the dead that was not brought under their observation.

In one place, the funeral having reached the ‘bus-tum,’ or burning ground, was just beginning to move round and round the pyre, built of cleft pine, in the form of an altar ; in another, the friends were taking leave of the corpse with tears and kisses ; while others, having re-opened the eyes which they had closed at the moment of death, and placed in the mouth the “obolus” for Charon, descended from the pile, which they forth-with set on fire with torches ; all the while averting their faces, in token of their grief. In another direction, the costly conflagration raged, rising in spiral flames towards heaven, or scattered the perfume of frankincense, cassia, and other priceless gums of Araby, being wrapped by the propitious winds, and fed perpetually by the flasks of oil and resinous substances of great price, cast upon the burning mass by the friends, with whatever else they deemed most agreeable to the deceased. Various animals, also, especially such as he had been fond of in life, were sacrificed and cast upon the pile, because the ‘manes,’ or ghost, was supposed to be delighted with blood. In ancient times, men also, either captives or slaves, used to be slaughtered ; but this practice had been given up for fights between gladiators, who were made to slay one

* “Tomb of Scaurus. This monument is the most singular and

another, in order to appease the dead.* Thus, also, the friend sometimes attested his affection for his friend, the spouse for her lord, the slave for his master, the soldier for his general. Here, the pile has sunk into a smouldering heap, where the mourners are piously collecting the white bones from among the embers, which they have damped with delicious wines ; there, they deposit them tenderly in the urn, with lacrymatories, or little glass vials filled with tears. Others, again, having consummated every sad rite and formality, even to the ‘ *verba novissima*,’ still turned round, for the last time, to reiterate their adieus. One, disconsolate as Andromache, erected a cenotaph ; another, after traversing seas and mountains, like the spouse of Germanicus, came with her wayworn train, to deposit the ashes of her lord among the urns and sarcophagi of his sires.

Children spread the periodical banquet on the parental tomb :

“ Charms that soothe the dead,
White milk, and lucid honey fresh distill’d
By the wild bee.” —

Aged fathers, venerable as Anchises, brought garlands and abundance of flowers in full bloom, to scatter where their own hopes lay withered and reduced to dust.* Death, in fine, assumed a thousand melan-

curious of all the tombs hitherto discovered at Pompeii, and remarkable in being covered with extremely low relievos, painted, of gladiatorial combats. The gladiators of Ampliatus, (by whom these wretches were hired out at so much a head,) whose names and fate appear to have been over their likenesses ; lions, bears, panthers, bulls, wolves, and rabbits, with dogs, stags, and nondescripts, all seem to have been brought upon the scene for the entertainment of the Pompeians, and satisfaction of Scaurus’ ghost.”—*Pompeiana*, vol. i. p. 104. What must have been the immensity and variety of these massacres to the manes of the dead in Rome, when such scenes took place in a petty country town ! Octavius sacrificed multitudes of the finest youths of Italy to the shade of his adoptive father, Julius Cæsar. Even Virgil makes a similar act of Eneas towards Pallas, a proof of his piety !—*Vide Sueton. in vit. Augusti, et Aeneid*, l. xi. 81.

* “ *Atque aliquis senior, veteres veneratus amores,
Annua constructo serta dabit tumulo.*”—*Tibullus*.

choly shapes along these regions ; grief, like a sybil, raved in many dialects, but in all she prophesied of immortality.

And still, it was in the very midst of these lugubrious exhibitions, so calculated toadden and haunt the mind with gloomy images, that sportive glee, and revelry, and mirth in its most roistering moods, seemed to have discovered their elysium.

Nature herself was decked in gala dress in the vicinity of the grave. Flowers and trees, green and blossoming in endless variety, bowers of which the leaves lived everlastingly, and bloomed out of season, seemed to laugh at grim winter in his hood of snow, as he stared at the genial landscape from Soracte and the Sabine hills. The poet's dream was realized to the letter :

“Vere tuo nunquam mulceri desinet annus,
Deliciasque tuas victa tuetur hyems.”

Fountains murmured in the groves. The soft lute was audible. Madrigals of passion and echoes of song and laughter reverberated through the pellucid atmosphere in ravishing confusion. Sportive games and the wanton dance were busy in the sunny glades and along the velvet sward. Venus was adored, and the son of Semele, with his bacchanals, ran riot in every direction, still urging the pursuit of pleasure with greater zest, the more nearly they beheld the testimonials of its evanescence.

“Brief,” they cried, “and full of tedium is our span of life, and in the end of mortals there is no remedy ; for *who was ever known to have returned from the grave ?*

“Of nothing are we born, and hereafter it shall be with us as if we had never lived ; for the breath in our nostrils is smoke, and speech a mere scintilla to move the heart, which being extinguished, the body shall be ashes, and the spirit poured abroad like liquid air.

“Like the track of a cloud our lives shall vanish ; they shall be dispersed like a mist that is driven away

before the beams of the sun, and is overpowered by the heat thereof.

“ Yet a little, and our names shall be forgotten ; nor will any one remember our deeds at all ; for our being is like the transit of a shadow, and there is no renewal of it ; for it is fast sealed, and *no one returneth from the dead.*

“ Come, therefore, and let us enjoy the good things that are present. Let us hasten to enjoy them, as in youth quickly, lest the flower of the time escape us.

“ Crown us with roses ere they be withered. Let no meadow escape our riot ; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.

“ Free the rein to desire, let every passion have its fill, everywhere leave we tokens of how we have enjoyed our fleeting hour ; for this is our portion—*it is fate !*”*

These outpourings of a delirium to which its own excesses had reduced humanity, although incoherent as the ravings of a maniac to other ears, were full of interest and import to the venerable pilgrim, revealing to him as they did, those mysteries of sin and sorrow into which nature had fallen from the eminence occupied by it at its creation. In each wild caprice of the passions, he studied the symptoms of the malady he had been sent to cure. The evil was evidently desperate—beyond the reach of every earthly remedy ; but this it was, precisely, that caused his heart to overflow with the anticipated triumphs of that secret, which he carried in his conscious breast.

From times the most remote, there had been prevalent among all nations a vivid presentiment and conviction of a future life. “ Tribes there might have been discovered destitute not only of the elegancies, but of the most necessary arts of humanized existence, ignorant of letters and of laws, without magistrates, without ideas of property or of fixed habitations ; but no tribe or people, however barbarous, had ever been

* Book of Wisdom, chap. ii. verses 1—9.

discovered without religion ;”* and no religious system had ever been met with, that did not turn upon the doctrine of future rewards and punishments.†

This belief was interwoven with the songs and poems of Musæus, Orpheus, Homer, Hesiod ; in short, of all the bards who had versified the traditions of elder Greece. It was not less conspicuous in Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, who had embodied in their works the opinions and impressions of more recent ages. Both philosophy and history were indebted to the same tenet for their liveliest charms. From it the poet derived the machinery and moral of his verse ; the lawgiver depended on it for the sanction and stability of his institutions ; the magistrate for the maintenance of order and probity in the state.‡

But the grand depository of this dogma, the chief agency by which it was to be developed, and vividly impressed upon the public mind, consisted in the ‘mysteries,’ that singular contrivance of Egyptian artifice, which gave such immense control over mind to the dominant casts of antiquity. Without a clear insight into this system, the moral and religious revolutions of paganism cannot be adequately comprehended.

Besides a public, or open form of worship, there was paid to each of the pagan gods a secret or hidden worship, to which none were admitted who had not passed through a preparatory ordeal, called initiation. This latter mode was called the ‘mysteries,’ usually confined to the locality which was under the tutelage of the deity in question, or where it was held in principal esteem ; so that when one nation borrowed the

* Plutarch against Colotes the Epicurean.

† “Toutes les religions du monde, tant la vraie que les fausses, roulent sur ce grand pivot, qu'il y a un Juge invisible qui punit et qui récompense, après cette vie, les actions de l'homme tant extérieures qu'intérieures. C'est de là que l'on suppose que découlent la principale utilité de la religion.”—Bayle, *Dict. Crit. et Hist. art. “Spinosa.”*

‡ See Dr. Warburton’s *Div. Legat.* vol. i. book ii. sec. 1.

gods of another, (as happened frequently,) it did not always adopt at the same time their mysteries. Thus, in Rome, the public and open worship of Bacchus was in use long before his mysteries were admitted ; and, on the other hand, again, the foreign god was sometimes brought in merely for the sake of the mysteries, as was the case when Isis and Osiris were introduced into Rome.

It was from the temples of the Nile this system of a double worship was derived, not only by Greece, but by countries the most remote.* They were introduced by Zoroaster into Persia, into Thrace by Orpheus, by Minos into Crete, by Cinyras into Cyprus, by Trophonius into Bœotia, by Cadmus and Inachus into Greece in general, and by Eretheus into Athens ; but although the mysteries were borrowed from Egypt, where they were sacred to Isis and Osiris, it was not in honour of these latter deities, but of their own national or local ones, that they were instituted by those who borrowed them. In Asia, they were to Mithras ; in Samothrace, to the mother of the gods, Cybele ; in Bœotia, to Bacchus ; in Cyprus, to Venus ; in Crete, to Jupiter ; in Lemnos, to Vulcan ; in Amphissa, to Castor and Pollux ; “ and so to others, in other places, to an incredible number.”† The mysteries of Ceres, and Proserpine, her daughter, were celebrated at

* Diodor. Sieul. l. i. “ This Herodotus, Diodorus, and Plutarch, expressly affirm ; and *in this all antiquity is unanimous.*”—*Warburton's Div. Legat.* book ii. sec. 4. p. 176.

Strabo, (Geog. l. iv.) quoting Artemidorus for a fabulous story, subjoins : “ But what he says of Ceres and Proserpine is more credible ; namely, that there is an island near Britain,—‘ Νῆσον πρὸς τὴν Βριτανικὴν,’—where they perform the same rites to those two goddesses as are in use in Samothrace.” So that these Egyptian mysteries had made their way even to Ireland.

† “ Postulat quidem magnitudo materiæ, atque ipsius defensionis officium, ut similiter, *cæteras turpitudinum species* persequamur ; vel quas produnt antiquitatis historiæ, vel *mysteria illa continent sacra, quibus initii nomen est*, et quæ non omnibus vulgo, sed paucorum taciturnitatibus tradi licet. Sed *Sacrorum innumeri ritus*, atque affixa deformitas singulis, corporaliter prohibet universa nos exequi.”—*Arnob. adv. Gentes*, l. v. p. 168.

Eleusis, a delightful suburb of Athens, with such unrivalled artifice and effect, that, in process of time, they in a great measure superseded all the other mysteries, not only of Greece, but of the whole world. Pilgrims from the utmost boundaries of the earth resorted thither for initiation, and Eleusis came at length to be regarded as the common sanctuary of the whole world.*

It was assiduously inculcated, that the most enviable advantages, both in this world and in that to come, were attached to initiation. “ Upon the initiated the orb of day shone with a more brilliant and benign influence ; and while the souls of the profane on departing from the body were to stick fast in mire, and be involved in darkness, to them was promised a transition, easy and delightful, to a state of singular felicity in the company of the gods.” For neglecting to be initiated even Socrates became suspected of impiety ; and Diagoras, the Melian, for dissuading his friends against it, was denounced as an atheist, by the Athenians, and had a price set upon his head.† Add to this the charm by which the multitude never fails to be attracted to whatever is involved in mysterious secrecy, and is difficult to be attained, and it will not appear surprising that the sacred groves and avenues of Eleusis were incessantly thronged with multitudes of all sexes, ages, and conditions, pressing eagerly for admission to these desiderated yet dreaded rites.

* “ Ubi initiantur gentes orarum ultimæ.”—*Cicer. de Nat. Deor.* l. i. ; also *Aristides*, l. iv., as quoted by Dr. Warburton, *ubi sup.*

† *Suidas, voce Διαγόπας, &c.* Socrates thought well of the mysteries, (see *Phædo*;) but neglected to be initiated.

The words of Cicero to his friend Atticus show in what high veneration and repute they stood even among sceptics ; “ Nam mihi cum multa eximia divinaque videntur Athenæ tuae peperisse, atque in vitâ hominum attulisse, tum nihil melius illis mysteriis, quibus ex agresti immanique vitâ exculti ad humanitatem, et mitigati sumus ; *initiaque* ut appellantur, ita revera *principia vitæ cognovimus* ; neque solùm cum lœtiâ vivendi rationem accepimus, sed etiam cum spe meliore moriendi.”—*De Legib. l. ii. 14.*

CHAPTER III.

“Di, quibus imperium est animarum, umbraeque silentes ;
Chaos, et Phlegethon, loca nocte silentia latè,
Sit mihi fas audita loqui ; sit numine vestro
Pandere res altâ terrâ et caligine mersas.”

Virgil, AEn. vi. 264.

Ye realms yet unreveal'd to human sight !
Ye gods who rule the regions of the night !
Ye gliding ghosts ! permit me to relate
The mystic wonders of your silent state.*

Dryden's Transl.

As the aspirants after initiation, crowned with myrtle sacred to Proserpine, began to approach the vestibule through which they were to pass, as if by anticipation, through the gates of death, and to witness with their living eyes the various destinies of disembodied spirits, the very earth itself seemed to quake and bellow beneath their feet ; the cypress-crowned precipices on either side of the way leading to the temple, seemed to nod above them, and noises and shrieks of terrific omen issued from the gloom of the forests through which they were advancing.

Then earth began to bellow, trees to dance,
And howling dogs in glimm'ring light advance.

“ At length entering into the mystic dome,” says Themistius,† “ they are filled with horror and consternation. From the pavement to the roof the temple is moved with earthquakes, which cause the pillars that support the lackered beams to rock and totter on their pedestals. The Furies yell and wave their torches,

* Even Claudian, though *professing* to treat of the Eleusinian mysteries, does not enter upon the interdicted secrets without going through the form, like Virgil, of praying for permission :

“ Dii quibus in numerum,” &c.

De Raptu Proserpinæ, l. i., sub init.

† Orat. in patr.

while crested serpents hiss around the shrines ; and, ever and anon, from the deep recesses of the sanctuary, voices issuing like thunder warn the profane intruders to be gone.* But they—buried in darkness rendered more terrible by frequent lightnings—are unable to advance forward or return ; until, at last, when they are ready to sink down overpowered by perplexity and dread, the majestic hierophant is descried with his satellites—the genii of the sun, of Mercury, and of the moon—all surrounded with a halo of celestial radiance, and clad in robes of resplendent brightness : with snowy hair and beard, and a diadem upon his brow, the chief beckons the aspirants, with his white wand, towards the portals of another world.”

“ In the initiation to the great mysteries,” says another ancient writer,† “ the mind is affected in the same manner as in death. The same phrases apply to both ; in both instances the vicissitudes of agony are the same ; in short, to be initiated is to die. The first stage is nothing but errors, and uncertainty, and laborious wandering ; a rude and fearful march through night and darkness ; and now arrived on the verge of death and initiation, every thing wears a dreadful aspect —all is horror, trembling, agony, and affright.”

Having crossed the fatal threshold, the “ mystics,” as the candidates for initiation were called, have first to make their way through darkness visible,—

“ Along the waste dominions of the dead,”—

where shapeless apparitions haunt their steps as in a horrid dream.

Just in the gate, and in the jaws of hell,
Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell,
And pale diseases, and repining age,
Want, fear, and famine’s unresisted rage ;
Here toils and death, and death’s half-brother sleep,
(Forms terrible to view) their sentry keep ;

* The “ Procul ô Procul ” of Virgil is a literal translation of the formulary used in the mysteries”—“ ΕΚΑΣ, ΕΚΑΣ ΕΣΤΕ ΒΕΒΗΛΟΙ.”

† Quoted in *Div. Legat.* book ii. sec. 4, from *Stobæus, Sermo exix.*

With anxious pleasures of a guilty mind,
Deep frauds before, and open force behind.
The Furies' iron beds ; and strife that shakes
Her hissing tresses and unfolds her snakes.

This first scene of the mysteries, intended to disgust the neophytes with the vices and infirmities that loiter about the infernal gates, as the idle and deformed are wont to loiter about the gates of cities, coincides exactly with what is said concerning initiation in Lucian's dialogue of the Tyrant. As a company made up of every condition of life are voyaging together into the other world, Mycillus breaks out and says :—

“ Bless us ! how dark it is ! Where now is the fair Mygillus ? Who can tell here whether Symmiche or Phyrna be the handsomer ? Every thing is alike and of the same colour ; and no room for comparison between beauties. Nay, my own old cloak, which but awhile ago presented to your eyes so irregular a figure, is become as honourable to wear as his Majesty's purple ; for both have vanished, and retired together under the same concealment.

“ But my friend, the Cynic, where are you ? Give me your hand ; cheer up ! *You are initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries.* Tell me now, do you not think this very like the *blind march they make there ?*”

CYNIC.—“ Oh exceedingly. And see, here comes one of the Furies, as I guess by her equipage, with her torch and her terrible tresses.”

“ Hence to deep Acheron they take their way,
Whose troubled eddies, thick with ooze and clay,
Are whirl'd aloft, and in Cocytus lost ;
Where Charon stands, who rules the dreary coast.

* * * * *

An airy crowd came rushing where he stood,
Which fill'd the margin of the fatal flood ;
Husbands and wives, boys and unmarried maids,
And mighty heroes, more majestic shades,
Thick as the leaves in autumn strew the woods ;
Or fowls by winter forced forsake the floods,
And wing their hasty flight to happier lands :
Such and so thick the shiv'ring army stands,
And press for passage with extended hands.”

It was at this stage, that the first great effort was made by the contrivers of the mysteries to turn them to the advantage of society.

In devising plans for the safety and protection of human life, these adepts in the arts of governing became convinced that nothing would more contribute to it than the public and solemn interment of the dead ; private murders without this provision being easily and securely perpetrated. On this account the most public and pompous funeral rites were introduced by the Egyptian sages. But to secure their observance by force of religion as well as custom, they taught that the deceased could not retire to a place of rest in the other world until these rites were paid to them in this. No superstition was more widely diffused, or had taken firmer hold of the popular mind than this ; so that the three greatest poets of ancient Greece did not hesitate to make the main plot and epic interest of their poems consist in the securing of the rites of sepulture for their respective heroes.*

These and other fictions considered of equal utility by rulers, who recognised in religion nothing but an imposture, as admirably adapted, as it was indispensable, to the well-being of society, were sedulously inculcated by their agent, the guide, or hierophant of the mysteries, in expounding to his trembling and astonished neophytes the shifting scenes that were made to pass before their bewildered senses, or through which they themselves were actually led.

Beyond Cocytus, having got past the den of Cerberus, they enter the regions of temporary expiation, to which certain souls are condemned by Minos for terms proportionate to their imperfections or venial trespasses—*venial* in the eyes of a political expediency, which estimated sins, not by their intrinsic wickedness, but by their bearings upon civil life. After passing

* The performance of funeral rites for Patroclus, Ajax, and Polynices is pursued by Homer, in the Iliad ; by Sophocles and Euripides, in the Ajax and the Phoenicians, as the chief object of interest.

the “lugentes campi,” or “mournful fields,” at last they came in sight of the infernal judges *Æacus*, *Rhadamanthus*, and *Minos*, seated on their terrible tribunals, where the road divides, leading, on the right, to *Elysium*, on the left to *Tartarus*, or hell.*

Here was the climax of terrors for the aspirants after initiation; here it was that stage effect surpassed itself in exhibiting the dwellings of eternal misery, which the mystagogue did not fail to tenant with such offenders as were most obnoxious to his employers, or most likely to escape the animadversion of the magistrate.

The curtain dropped at this point, and the crowd was permitted to revisit the upper world, vividly impressed with all they had heard and seen, and elated beyond measure at having penetrated all that was most recondite in the mysteries; whereas, in truth, they had been led through the mere preludes of initiation; for from that privilege all were rigorously excluded, except the élite of the ruling casts. In Egypt, from whence the whole imposture took its rise, even the kings were not initiated until after their coronation.

Wherefore, the indiscriminate multitude being dismissed, terrified by the sight of *Minos* and *Rhadamanthus*, and with the warnings of the hapless *Theseus* and *Ixion* still ringing in their ears, the few selected on account of their high station and influence in society, after bathing and being decked out in aromatic raiment, are introduced, in good earnest, to the “higher mysteries.” This was called *autopsia*, or “beholding the divine splendours with one’s living eyes;” the illuminées (*ἐπόπται*) were called *eudaimonai*, or “blessed.” “Being now about to un-

* As the entire political contrivance of the mysteries was raised upon the primeval tradition as to the immortality of the soul, and the destinies reserved for it in a future world, it becomes evident, that the doctrine of a purgatory was an integral part of that tradition, derived through Adam and the Patriarchs, from revelation. Dr. Warburton is particularly ingenious in expounding the purgatory of the mysteries; see *Div. Legat. b. ii. sec. 4*, pp. 212 to 220.

dergo the lustrations," says Sopater,* " the lustrations which immediately precede initiation into the higher mysteries, they called me happy." " A region all over illuminated and radiant with a celestial splendour is now revealed to the wondering and delighted vision. The clouds and thick darkness of the lesser mysteries are dispersed ; and the mind emerges as it were, into a daylight, full of cheerfulness, as all before was full of disconsolate obscurity."

" These holy rites perform'd, they take their way,
Where long extended plains of pleasure lay.
The verdant fields with those of heaven may vie,
With ether vested, and a purple sky ;
The blissful seats of happy souls below,
Stars of their own, and their own suns they know."

" The first stage of the mysteries," says a writer already quoted,† " is nothing but errors and uncertainties ; a rude and fearful march through night and darkness ; but this scene once past, a miraculous and divine light reveals itself, and shining plains and flowery meadows open on all hands before them. Here they are entertained with hymns and dances, with the sublime doctrines of sacred knowledge, and with reverend and holy visions. And now, become perfect and initiated, they are free, and no longer under restraint ; but crowned and triumphant, they walk up and down the regions of the blessed, converse with pure and holy men, and celebrate the sacred mysteries at pleasure."

The great secret revealed in these higher mysteries was, that the entire system of the popular religion, so emphatically inculcated in the lesser mysteries, was an imposture and delusion. The guide, or hierophant, informed the illuminée, that Jupiter, Mercury, Venus, Mars, and the whole rabble of licentious deities—objects of worship to the vulgar—were, in reality, only deceased mortals, subject during life to similar vices

* In Divis. Quæst.

† From Stobæus, Serm. cxix.

and passions with himself; that there was but one supreme Cause of all things—the Creator of the universe—who pervaded all things by his virtue and governed them by his providence.* He was instructed in the doctrine of a sublime and spiritual immortality, and in the doctrine of the *metempsychosis*, or transmigration of souls, in which the priests of Egypt had disguised the divine dogmas of a middle state, and of the original fall of man. Finally, he was impressed with the importance of upholding and perpetuating, by all possible means, the system of popular delusion, with which he had now been made acquainted. He was told that it was not only expedient, but indispensable to the preservation of order in states, and to the very existence of society; and there is no principle of government upon which a more perfect unanimity exists amongst the great jurists, statesmen, and moralists of antiquity, than on this; no point on which they insist with greater emphasis.

“ It is impossible to govern women and the common people,” says Strabo, “ and to keep them in subordina-

* See Cudworth's *Intell. Syst.* cap. iv. sec. 18. Also Warburton, *Div. Leg. b. ii. sec. 4*, quotes from Clem. of Alex. *Adm. ad Gentes*, Euseb. *Præp. Evang. l. iii.*, the hymn in which the doctrine of the Unity was inculcated by the *Mystagogue*—“ I will declare a secret to the initiated; but let doors be shut against the profane. But thou, attend carefully to my song; for I shall speak of important truths. Suffer not, therefore, the former prejudices of your mind to deprive you of that happy life which the knowledge of these mysterious truths will procure you. Go on in the right way, and see the sole Governor of the universe. He is one, and of himself alone; and to that One all things owe their being. He operates through all; was never seen by mortal eyes, but does himself see every thing.”

What is the subjoined text, relative to the doctrines taught in the mysteries, but a paraphrase of the inspired words of the Psalmist? “ For behold, I have been conceived in iniquities,” &c.—*Ps. li. 5.*

“ *Ex quibus humanæ vite erroribus et ærumnis fit, ut interdum veteres illi sive vates, sive in sacris initiiisque tradendis divinae mentis interpres, qui nos ob aliqua scelera suscepta in vitâ superiore, pœnarum luendarum causâ, natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videantur.*”—Cicero, *Fragmen. ex lib. de Philosop. apud Warburt.* vol. i. p. 137.

tion to piety and virtue by the precepts of philosophy. This can be done only by the superstitions of Polytheism, raised and supported by ancient fictions and modern prodigies. Therefore, the fables of the thunder of Jupiter, the ægis of Minerva, the trident of Neptune, the thyrsus of Bacchus, and the snakes and torches of the Furies, with all the other apparatus of ancient mythology, were the engines which the legislator employed as bugbears to strike terror into the childish imagination of the multitude.” It is to the maintenance of these fictions in their full vigour, that Polybius, one of the keenest politicians of antiquity, attributes the stability and active force of states, while their decline and fall are rendered inevitable, according to his theories, by suffering these impostures to fall into popular contempt. Socrates, on his trial, proclaimed it to be the solemn duty of every citizen to conform to the established religion of his country, no matter how absurd he might believe it to be. As a leader of the oligarchy, Marcus Tullius Cicero is a zealot for the superstitions which he ridicules in his intercourse with his own order; and Varro, the most learned of the Romans, professed, without disguise, that “there were many religious truths which it was not advantageous to the state to be generally known, and *many things in religion which, though false, it was expedient the people should believe.*”*

It was on this iniquitous political expediency, against which the apostle denounces “the wrath of God,” that all the grinding tyrannies of pagan antiquity, whether administered by one, or by an oligarchy, (whether patrician or democratic,) were erected and sustained. The inferior and slave castes were held in profound darkness and degradation by a hardened and selfish ascendancy in each state; who kept within their own narrow circle the monopoly of all knowledge, and, therefore, of all power; nor will it be found easy to thread the labyrinth of pagan politics, unless with this clue in hand.

* Apud S. August. de Civ. Dei. l. iv. 31.

The sense of superiority over the humbler classes derived by the patrician, or initiated cast, from the enjoyment of this great secret, as well as the preservation of those darling interests and privileges which they knew depended on it, might have seemed to guarantee sufficiently that it would not be divulged. However, for greater security, it was made death by the laws to invade or reveal the mysteries. No art was spared to impress the multitude with the impiety of any such attempt. It was for this that Theseus (although so renowned a hero) was exhibited, at the conclusion of the lesser mysteries, in the hottest den of Tartarus, warning all, with dismal cries, to beware how they imitated his impiety.

“Sedet, æternumque sedebit
Infelix Theseus ; Phlegeasque miserrimus omnes
Admonet, et magna testatur voce per umbras ;
Discite justitiam moniti, et non temnere divos.”*

These devices proved so effective, that, to be detected intruding on the mysteries was certain death. The Athenians brought on a war with Philip, by sacrificing two young Acarnanians, his subjects, who happened to enter the temple of Ceres, among a crowd of neophytes ; and Æschylus, the tragic poet, once narrowly escaped being torn to pieces on the stage, for some expression that seemed to divulge the awful mystery. He fled to the altar of Bacchus, and the Areopagus, to which he appealed, acquitted him.†

* *AEn.* l. vi. 616.

† Besides the hierophants and the various mystagogues of the sacred aristocratic branch of the Eumolpidæ, there were always at Eleusis, during the celebration of the mysteries, a number of magistrates, with one of the archons, for the time being, at their head ; who enforced order, and did not hesitate to punish with death any violation of the standing rules.—*Cab. Cyclop.* No. 70, p. 154.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Proseminatæ sunt familiae dissentientes, et multum disjunctæ et
disparæ, cum tamen omnes se philosophi *Socraticos* et dici vel-
lent et esse arbitrarentur.”—*Cicero, de Orator.* l. iii.

“ I did not, in the first instance,” said the genius of Philosophy,
“ address myself to the Greeks, but passed them by, knowing
how tractable they would be to my yoke. My first course was
to the Barbarians, and especially the Indians, the most numer-
ous tribe of men on earth. They descended from their elephants
to embrace me: and the Brachmans and Gymnosophs still
live in the knowledge and practice of my discipline. I turned
next to the Ethiopians, and from them to the Egyptians, whose
prophets and priests became my pupils in *theological* knowledge
and the worship of the gods. I then visited Babylon, and gave
her Chaldeans and Magi similar instruction. My subsequent
progress was through Scythia into Thrace; from whence, I sent
before me into Greece, Eumolpus and Orpheus, the one informed
in all the rites of religion, (the founder of the mysteries at
Eleusis,) and the other conversant in the powers of music.”—
Lucian. Dial. de Fugitiv.

So long as the imposture lasted, the mysteries served
all the purposes of a state religion; enabling the
ascendant cast to excite, control, and direct the mul-
titude as they pleased; but the principle of free
inquiry, first introduced by Socrates, was too con-
genial to the Greek intellect not, in the long run,
to prove fatal to their authority.*

The sages, or wise men, of the elder ages of Greece,
had been careful to shun the perilous confines of theo-
logy and ethics, restricting themselves, for the most
part, to silent and harmless inquisitions into nature,

* “ The next step the legislator took was to affirm and establish
the general doctrine of a Providence, which he had delivered in
his laws, by a very particular and popular method of inculcating the
belief of a future state of rewards and punishments. This was by
the invention of the mysteries, the most sacred part of pagan
religion, and framed to strike most forcibly and deep into the
minds and imaginations of the people.”—*Dr. Warburton, Div. Legal-
&c., book ii. sec. 4.*

and especially into the elements of the world, and the laws and mechanism of the celestial bodies.* Indeed, there is extant, in Diogenes Laërtius, a remonstrance written by ancient Thales to Pherecydes Cyrus, (the first preceptor of Pythagoras,) to dissuade him from continuing some lectures which he had commenced concerning religion and the nature of the gods; for Thales, like the sages generally, had been initiated at Memphis, and was on that account averse to whatever might endanger the reign of the popular superstitions.† He and his successors in the Ionic school, of which he was the founder, observed the strictest secrecy as to their esoteric, or hidden doctrines, and were on that account so averse to writing, that it is only with Socrates (born in the 4th year of the 77th Olymp.) the written monuments of philosophy begin.‡ He, “the first to bring philosophy down from the clouds,” as Cicero expresses it, “and to introduce her not only into cities but private dwellings,”§ (or, in plain terms, the first teacher of *ethics*,) so disconcerted and exposed the sophists by his cutting irony, that from being looked up to almost as demi-gods, they became the laughing-stock of Athens. These descendants of Thales were, by all accounts, a set of vain and wordy rhetoricians, really very ignorant, while pretending to know and explain every thing.¶ But to form adepts—consummate in the wiles and chicane of sophistry—was their chief ambition. It was found to be a more lucrative branch even than rhetoric. The most superficial

* Thucydides, l. i. “In rebus occultis, et ab ipsâ naturâ involutis.”—*Cic. Acad. Quæst.* l. i. 4.

† According to Apollodorus, in Chron. apud Laërt. l. i. c. 37, Thales was born at Miletus, in the 35th Olympiad. He travelled in Asia and Crete—“Certius vero et *indubitatum*, jam senem in Egyptum profectum fuisse, eo animo, ut cum sacerdotibus astronomicisque ibi versari illi liceret. Institutum ibi fuisse a sacerdotibus Memphiticis totamque philosophiam artesque mathematicos didicisse, Laërtius, Plutarchus, et Jamblicus tradunt.”—*Bruch. Hist. Crit.* l. ii. 1.

‡ See Themistius, *Orat. xxvi.*, p. 317.

§ *Tusc. Quæst.* l. v. 4. *Acad. Quæst.* l. i. 4.

¶ *Cic. de Orat. xii.*

might be easily initiated in it ; and it promised, if not the glories of the rostrum, the more intelligible triumph of puzzling and perplexing, beyond the chance of extrication, every one who could be inveigled into an exchange of conversation. Aristotle and other writers have preserved the names and natures of some of these fallacies, “quibbles,” “snares,” “hooks,” “labyrinths,” “nooses,” “nets.”—There was the “crocodile,” the “nobody,” the “electro,” the “horns,” the “do-nothing,” the “liar,” the “dominant,” the “bald-pate,” the “heap of sand,” the “tumbler.” The first person who made his appearance was seized on, by the young adept thus appointed, and compelled to answer some simple, self-evident question. One word led to another ; the eye of the querist became quicker and quicker, the smile lurking about his mouth, warned the poor innocent victim that something was going wrong, till the final stroke was ready, and he found himself planted in an absurdity, amidst a roar of laughter from the bystanders, and shouts of applause to the querist, among which he went off in triumph to surprise and lay prostrate some new antagonist. Stranger or countryman, father or mother, clown or philosopher, guests at a feast, idlers in the Agora, loungers in the baths—man, woman, or child—all were to be subjected to the conquest of this new machinery. Nor could this species of knight-errant ever be at a loss for adventures. Beauty and action were the two paramount objects of Athenian admiration. Hence rivalry of whatever kind was then the favourite amusement.* From the rival dramas on the stage, to the pugilists in the arena—from the plaintiff and defendant in a lawsuit, to the struggles of political parties throughout the whole of Greece—from the propounder of riddles at the supper-table, to the battle of demagogues on the rostrum—from the fighting cocks which they carried about in their bosoms, to the pair of grave philoso-

* “Contentionis avidiores quam veritatis.”—*Cic. de Orat.* l. i.

phers sitting on the marble benches in the exercising grounds, surrounded with a gaping crowd with head peering above head, and eager listeners in the far background stretching themselves out to catch the sounds of disputation;—every thing was contest. But, for all classes the contest of rival sophists was the most attractive.”*

It was for exposing the frivolity of this sort of education, and for drawing off the noble youth of Athens from the sophists to more grave and solid studies, that they drugged the bowl for Socrates with hemlock.†

Plato, his youngest pupil, having fled with the rest, mostly to Megara, where he studied dialectics with his friend Euclid, set out after his recall to Athens for southern Italy and Sicily, in order to get acquainted with the doctrines and discipline of Pythagoras.‡ From thence he went, according to Apuleius, to Cyrene to study under Theodore the geometer; thence to Egypt, where after long and severe probation he was initiated by the hierarchs of the Nile.§ He is said to have visited the Jews also, and Magna Græcia a second time. Like the bee returning to mount Hybla, after these industrious peregrinations through so many lands renowned for wisdom, Plato enriched with all science returned to Athens; and, in a beauteous villa called Academos, which the graces and the “tuneful nine” conspired to adorn, continued long to

* Sewell, *Introd. to the Dial. of Plato*, p. 131.

† Laërtius gives the form of impeachment brought against him by a young rhetorician, Melito, at the instigation of Anytus. Melito was beheaded, Anytus banished, when Athens, roused by the indignation of all Greece, became conscious of what she had done to the “wisest of men,” as Socrates was styled by the Delphic oracle.

‡ *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. I. v. 29.*

§ “Dici non potest, quanta consensione hanc opinionem omplexi fuerint veteris ecclesiæ doctores.”—Vide P. Dan. Huet. *Dem. Er. Pr. iv. c. 2*, p. 37; and *And. Dacier. Vet. Plat. p. 68.*—“Audisse te credo, Tubero, Platonem, Socrate mortuo, primum in Egyptum discendi causâ post in Italiam et in Siciliam contendisse ut Pythagoræ inventa perdiscret; eumque et cum Archytâ Tarentino, et cum Timeo Locro multum fuisse; et Philoleo commentarios esse nactum.”—*Cic. de Re Rep. I. i. p. 32. Car. Mai's Discoveries*, tom. i.

enchant by his eloquence, and to be listened to as an oracle by, the youthful aristocracy of Greece. Although he did not, like the Pythagoreans, bind his auditors to secrecy by an oath, or oblige them to pass through any form of initiation, he hung up a veil or curtain before the portals of the academy, to indicate that the doctrines there delivered were not to be divulged abroad ; and, in conformity with the Egyptian practice, he invariably observed the system of a double doctrine.* And hence, his works when not studied with this clue appear to be full of riddles and contradictions ; for the better to disguise the truth from all but the elect, he adopts a variety of unmeaning names and expressions ; frequently uses the same words to express the most opposite ideas, with a view to bewilder and confound any of the vulgar into whose hands his works might fall. His whole system, also, was made up not only of different theories, but of such as were, in some instances, destructive of one another.† Thus he attempted to combine the “ *ipse dixit*,” or infallible authority, of Pythagoras, with the freethinking principles of Socrates, his beloved master.

It mattered little, however, that there were inconsistencies in what he taught, for the enchantment of his presence and of his sublime speculations, revealed in language such as Jupiter might have used, were he to express himself in the Attic dialect, so kept the spirits of his hearers spell-bound, that it was not till Speusippus, his nephew, had succeeded him in the academy, that the judgment was free to exercise itself upon the merits of his system. The first to revive the Socratic principle of the “ *akatalepsis*,” or “ *philosophic doubt*”—put in abeyance during the reign of Plato—was Arcesilaus, or Arcesilas, as he is called by Cicero ; and, according to S. Augustin,‡ he

* In *Timæo*, tom. iii. Op. p. 28, and p. 341.

† “ *Non tantum diversa inter se, sed plane quoque contraria.*”—*Bruch. Hist. Crit.* l. ii. p. 666. “ *Platonis autem auctoritate, qui varius, et multiplex, et copiosus fuit, una et consentiens duobus vocabulis philosophiae forma instituta est.*”—*Cic. Acad. Quæst.* l. i. 4.

‡ *Cont. Acad.* l. iii. 17.

was urged to innovate upon the old half-Egyptian, half-Socratic system of Plato, not only by his own tortuosity of genius and disputatious turn, but also that the academy might not be superseded by the porch ; where Zeno had just founded a new school, called of the Stoics, which speedily attained to great celebrity.

In his aversion for dogmatism, Socrates used to say that he knew but one thing for certain, which was, "That he knew nothing ;" but even this was too dogmatical for Arcesilas ;* it was his pride to doubt even of that one thing of which Socrates said he was certain ; and, having cast off all restraints and disguises, the founder of the middle academy, as his sect was called, openly " and with insane temerity called every thing into doubt —honour, probity, even the worship of the gods ; admitting nothing to be certain, or known as fact ; but, on the contrary, endeavouring to subvert every thing, even the most self-evident, by argument."† Sects multiplied in Hellas. Each city soon beheld not one but several sects, each scholar excogitated a theory for himself ; and some idea of the complete intellectual anarchy in which Greece ultimately became involved, may be formed from the fact, that Pyrrho, who called every thing into doubt—even his own existence—was elected high priest by his fellow citizens of Elis ; that, on his account, all philosophers were exempted from paying taxes, and that, by public acclamation, he was made free of Athens.‡

It will not be difficult to conjecture how it fared with the mysteries in this break up of all old-fashioned prepossessions. It was long since the most keen-sighted and inquisitive of the democracy had caught some glimpses of things as they were, through the chinks of the imposture, and some echoes of irreligious scepticism from the loud wrangling of the schools ; but when it was proclaimed in the forum, from the rostrum, under

* " Itaque Arcesilas negabat esse quidquam quod sciri posset, ne illud quidem ipsum, quod Socrates sibi reliquisset," &c.—*Cic. Acad. Quæst. 1. i. 12.*

† Bruch. ubi sup. p. 759.

‡ Diog. Laërt.

the porticos of the very temples, in the theatres, and at the great Isthmian games, that the lesser mysteries were only a melo-dramatic show, and all the stories about Charon, Minos, and Rhadamanthus, mere fictions and mummeries to frighten simpletons and babes, it became plain to the most illiterate that they had been duped. Yet the multitude did not rise up like the drunken guests of Alcibiades to wreak vengeance on the idols of their past infatuation. The festivals of polytheism seemed to have as great a charm as ever ; in the concourse of both sexes and of all orders to seek initiation there was no falling off ; but what had been resorted to before as an awful worship and salutary discipline was now frequented as a pastime, and as a convenient cloak and opportunity for the most profound licentiousness.* The patriotism and all the energies of Greece were involved in the ruin of the political impostures by which they had been hitherto sustained. This fact is recognised by such men as Polybius, who deplores, that from the time the old established forms of superstition were overthrown, “ there was no longer any sanctity in oaths or promises among the Greeks ; no regard for conscience or the sanctions of futurity ; no public principle ; no honour or good faith between man and man.”†

Thus it was, that every thing had conspired to prepare the way for Epicurus. Born on the 7th of Gamelion, in the 3rd year of the 109th Olympiad, at a little town of Attica ; he is said to have been moved by the miserable condition of absurdity and discord to

* Such is their reputation with the Fathers of the Church. See particularly Clem. Alex. Dis. to the Gentiles, and the Præp. Evang. of Eusebius. Apuleius gives no better notion of them. They became the last lurking places of Paganism, in its last and most corrupt state. Even so late as the reign of Valentinian, the mysteries were the “ life’s life” of the corrupt and degraded Achaians. The celebrated pagan senator Prætextatus, in pleading in their favour, tells the emperor that, deprived of them, the Greeks would drag out—*αβιοτὸν βιον*—an inanimate existence.—*Zosimus*, l. iv. *Hist. Novæ*.

† Polyb. Histor. l. vi. 54 and 55 ; also Cab. Cyclop. No. 50, Rome, vol. i. p. 248.

which philosophy had been reduced by the rival sects, to strike out a new system, which, without running after chimeras, as the Academists, the Stoics, the Peripatetics, and Cynics did, might suggest some tangible means of arriving at beatitude.* With this view he got rid of the two great primeval doctrines of providence and a future life; grounding his denial of these dogmas on the mutual contradiction and variations of those sects that held them, and mainly on the fact that *no one had returned from the dead*. Hence it was his constant cry to his disciples, that death was an imaginary evil—the term of consciousness, and the beginning of an eternal, dreamless sleep—and that, therefore, it was the summit of true wisdom, the part of every philosopher deserving the name, not to waste his life and torment his intellect in bootless fears or hopes about an imaginary hereafter, but to seize the passing hour, and by every species of pleasure attainable, to try and make a heaven of the earth.†

As all the public schools were preoccupied—Academos by the Platonists, the Lyceum by the Peripatetics, the Cynosarga by the Cynics, and the Portico by the Stoics—Epicurus purchased, for eighty minæ, a piece of ground, which he had laid out and adorned as a delightful garden.—“Walks, leading through wildernesses of shade and fragrance; glades, opening, as if to afford a play-ground for the sun-shine; temples, rising on the very spots where imagination herself would have called them up; and fountains and lakes, in alternate motion and repose, either wantonly courted the verdure, or calmly slept in its embrace.” There, in marble halls, and bowers of aromatic shade,

“ Where bliss, in all the countless shapes
 That fancy’s self to bliss hath given,
 Came clustering round, like road-side grapes
 That woo the traveller’s lip at even;”‡

* Bruch. ubi sup. p. 1233. † Diog. Läert. in vit. Epicur.
 ‡ Alciphron. Letter i.

the high priest of concupiscence lectured and lived with the gay, the brilliant, and the beautiful, not only of Athens and all wide Hellas, but of Egypt and the voluptuous East. He impressed it on his impassioned auditory, that philosophy was not wrinkled, austere and forbidding, as she had been so long represented, especially by Zeno and the Cynics, but a goddess, gay, smiling, and ever propitious to the passions which seek under her auspices for enjoyment. Over the entrance to "the Garden," was an inscription, promising the long and painfully sought "summum bonum," or "supreme good," on terms at once so easy and delightful, that the Lyceum and the Porch, as well as their rivals, were speedily deserted;* and, what filled all Greece with admiration was, that no schism or rebellious sect grew out of the philosophy of Epicurus; but that all, with wondrous concord, persevered according to the dictates of their great master, in seeking after happiness in nothing but the indulgence of their desires.† They celebrated as a god that inimitable sage who had emancipated them from all fear of providence and of futurity, tranquillizing all their qualms of conscience, placing wisdom in its true light, giving them a tangible theory for securing felicity, and exalting them, as it were, above the heaven and all the mythology of the poets, by enabling them to trample religion under foot.‡ "Leaving to others the task of disputing about the future, the new school centred all its wisdom in the enjoyment of the present."§

* According to Senec. Ep. xxi., "Hospes hic bene manebis; hic summum bonum voluptas est."

† Senec. Ep. xxiii. Themist. Orat. 4. Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. xiv. 5.

‡ ——"Deus ille fuit, Deus, include Memmi,
Qui princæps vitæ rationem," &c.

* * * *

Quare religio pedibus subjecta vicissim,
Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cœlo."

Lucret. l. v. in init. et l. vi. 80.

§ The Epicurean, p. 11.

Some being eager to drown the memory of their crimes, and the fears of future retribution, and others to catch even a few precarious hours from the misery which threatened to absorb them in the common wreck, it happened that many among the Romans, theretofore more inclined to stoicism, were driven, during the reign of terror, in which the old republic was made away with, to take shelter in the "Garden."* But, under the enervating despotism of Augustus and his successors, now protracted beyond half a century, the philosophy of concupiscence was universally embraced; and the hymns which so aroused the sympathies of the venerable pilgrim, as he journeyed along among the tombs, were but a partial echo of the sentiments which then prevailed through the entire length and breadth of the Roman empire.† And yet it would seem as if the primeval dogmas of the soul's immortality and of an all-ruling Providence had remained firm and in full integrity beneath the ruins of the impostures which had been constructed on them. Humanity still clung to them by its instincts after the shipwreck of its faith. The bare idea that there was no heaven, no bright, blissful, interminable hereafter, had rendered hope insane; nor could she be induced, even by the blandishments of Epicurus, or by any brutal satiety of the passions, to relinquish her sublime and immemorial aspirations without regret.‡ Oh, how sorrid and odious "the sty," in which she was now taught by Philosophy to imbrute herself, compared with that pure and celestial region of immortality to which the inspired longings of her bosom had been so fondly and so long directed! Even in the delirium brought on by the excesses into which the panders and hierarchs of

* Bruch. tom. ii. p. 22.

† Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall, &c., chap. iii., near the beginning.

‡ "Praeclarum autem nescio quid adepti sunt (Epicurei,) quod didicerunt, se, cum tempus mortis venisset, totos esse perituros, quod ut ita sit (nihil enim pugno) quid habet ista res aut lætabile, aut gloriosum?"—Cic. *Tusc. Quæst.* l. i. 21.

the passions had beguiled her, her tottering steps still led her to the confines of that eternity from which no seduction or violence could divorce her heart. Hope, in her bereavement, still lingered among the sepulchres ; and, in tomb and pyramid, built up temples to expectation. Casting down that form, still divinely beautiful in its abandonment, she strove to exhaust the anguish of her spirit by inscribing epitaphs and melancholy emblems upon marble and plates of brass. She went to the gate of the grave and listened—but no echo of tidings came from the dark shore beyond. Of all the voyagers there returned not one. Hope unbarred the gates, gazed full into the charnel house, and, recoiling with a wild shriek, broke away in frantic paroxysms of despair. And, even still, it was the burden of her incoherent canticles, in which she one time exulted, at another poured out her wailings, over her disappointment, that “ No one returneth from the dead ! ” Yet it was in the vehemence of her desperation that the venerable pilgrim discerned the overtures of her cure. It was the object of his own mission to preach to her, and give her the tangible guarantees, which neither Plato nor any of the philosophers or sages of Greece had been able to give, that, “ One who had passed through the gate of death had returned to his brethren, with tidings the most ineffable and peremptory, that there awaited them beyond the grave, not an elysium such as the poets sung, or the mysteries represented, but such a heaven as neither eye hath seen, ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to picture.”

CHAPTER V.

“In their dress, their table, their houses, and their furniture, the favourites of fortune united every refinement of conveniency, of elegance, and of splendour, whatever could soothe their pride, or gratify their sensuality.”—*Gibbon’s Hist. of the Decl. and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. ii. p. 64.

“Quid inter pueros et nos interest? Nisi quod nos circa tabulas, et statuas insanimus, carius inepti? illos reperti in littore caluli leves, et aliquid habentes varietatis delectant; nos ingenitum maculae columnarum, sive ex Ægyptiis arenis, sive ex Africæ solitudinibus advectæ, porticum aliquem, vel capacem populi coenationem ferunt. Miramur parietes tenui marmore indutos, cum sciamus quale sit quod absconditur; oculis nostris imponimus. Et cum auro tecta perfundimus, quid aliud quam mendacio gaudemus?”—*Seneca*, Ep. xcvi.

ABSORBED in thought upon these occurrences, he turned aside from the great Appian thoroughfare, close to the tombs of the Horatii, and crossed the “*Via Latina*,” in order to reach the Asinarian gate, which was comparatively unfrequented.

Immediately within the walls, to the left, there stood a palace upon that gentle eminence called “*Cœli Montana*,” of extent and aspect so imposing that it might have been mistaken for the abode of Cæsar; yet, it was to this edifice the lowly wayfarer directed his steps, without a moment’s hesitation, for *it was the first he met*. The gates of bronze were flung wide open, and looked as burnished and stately as the portals of Olympus. The pilgrim ascended the marble flight which led to the platform in front of the portico, entered the vestibule meekly, but still with the unhesitating tread of one who is conscious that his errand deserves a welcome; nor was he barred of entrance by the “*ostiarii*,” or porters, who lounged about, nor

did he pause himself until he came to the first “atrium” or grand reception hall.*

A hundred columns of jasper sustained its roof—a dome covered with lamina, or valves of gold inlaid with diamonds, and enamelled paintings, in the most exquisite manner of the Greeks. The frieze, rivalling that of the Parthenon in beauty, represented a triumph during the Marsic war. The wainscot round the walls—consisting of rare and beauteous marbles, the undulated Thasian, or Carystian, the vermiculated Phrygian, spotted with the blood of Atys—was trimmed with ivory and decorated with beautiful medallions and arabesques. In arcades behind the peristyle, were ranged, in chronological order, and in their official costumes, the images of consuls, ediles, tribunes of the people, censors—the long line of statesmen, patriots, and great captains, who had shed lustre on a house renowned, even in Rome, for its ancestral laurels. The tablinum was hung with portraits, some of them as old as the times of Fabius Pictor. For the most part, the images were enshrined in costly tabernacles overshadowed with trophies, and the lamps of purest gold that burned before them were tended as religiously as the fire of Vesta. In the centre of the hall, which was of a circular form, there was an altar to Jupiter Hospitalis, with no canopy above it but the heavens, expanding over the orifice in the dome like an awning of transparent azure; and from this there descended a flood of splendour that inundated the entire atrium—tinging its furniture and ornaments with the radiance of enchantment.

* A vestibule, a lofty atrium, with an ample peristyle, or portico and ambulatories; as well as libraries, pinacothecas, and basilicas, are among the requisites of a patrician palace specified by Vitruvius. Strangers did not uninvited go into the (cubicula) chambers, triclinia, baths, or other apartments appropriated to the private and particular uses of the master of the house and his family; but any who had business to transact might enter the vestibulum, cavædium, or peristyle.—*Gell's Pompeiana*, vol. i. p. 148. The ostiarius was usually a chained slave with dogs, the latter were sometimes merely represented in gold and silver. *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 182.

The pilgrims continued to advance through galleries, saloons, and suites of stately apartments without end—a labyrinth of ever-increasing splendour, but they paused not to gaze or wonder at the strange magnificence. The entire palace was lighted up and decorated for some grand festivity, as if for the reception of a bride. Yet, there was no one to be seen, save now and then a slave, gliding, like a melancholy vision, over the noiseless pavement, to tend the lamps or scatter perfumes and sweet-scented leaves. The song of one handmaid, as she adjusted a lily in a garland, startled the venerable pilgrim as if it had been a parable :

“Thou, too, for thy bloom art cherish’d ;
But when that bloom hath perish’d,
Thou, too, shalt be flung away.”

At last, the voluptuous swell of music came from a distance upon the ear ; and, directed by the sound, the pilgrims came to the interior recesses of the palace, where lay the “triclinium” or hall of feast.

It was a sumptuous hall, oblong in form, and divided, as to style of decoration and arrangement, into two unequal parts. The greater division was occupied by the guests, disposed upon couches, on that side only of the tables next the colonnades, so that the various attendants and ministers of the feast were free to move about on the centre space, extending from the cross table at the head, between the two lateral ones, down to the second or lesser division of the hall, occupied by the orchestra and the stage for jugglers, dancers, and pantomimes, who exhibited during the intervals of the long protracted banquet. Taste the most refined directing the arts, then in the meridian of perfection, and ministered to by unbounded opulence, had exhausted every resource upon this sanctuary of indulgence. The ceilings that beamed with the effulgence of a golden firmament, glittering with starlike gems, were so contrived as to vary in aspect with the successive courses, and from them showers,

as it were, of the most exhilarating and aromatic dews were made to distil upon the languishing voluptuaries. The hangings were of Tyrian purple. Flowers, in festoons, were suspended from the arcades and niches, where stood Apollo, the Muses, Venus, Psyche, the Graces, and the quiver-armed god. Endless, in short, was the variety of scenes and emblems that had been conceived by poetic fancy to revel in that temple of delights; and triumphant art, as with a wand, had given them the very air and breath of life.

The mosaic pavement, figured with the most grotesque devices, was scattered over with the soft powder of odorous wood, damped with saffron, vermillion, and other brilliant dyes. It glittered with filings of gold and the dust of the sparkling stone. The board of the feast, made of citron wood from the furthest confines of Mauritania, was supported on feet of ivory, and covered with a leaf or plateau of silver elegantly enchased. The couches, each of which accommodated three, were made of bronze overlaid with silver, gold, and tortoiseshell; the mattresses were of Gallic wool, dyed purple; the pillows and cushions of the softest down were covered with the priceless embroidery of Babylon.*

Abandoned to every effeminacy as they lolled upon these beds like so many deities on sun-lit clouds, the lordly voluptuaries were regaled with every dainty of air, earth, and ocean, while nymphlike and obsequious forms were stationed with fans and vases of perfume, or moved round the couches to sounds of soft melody with goblets of racy wine. Others burned incense, or placed fresh viands and flowers on the altars of the

* Scarcely Exeter Hall, or the Worcester Music Meeting, could produce a band of instruments more various, or with harder names, than occur in the list of a full orchestra given by Athenæus, (l. xiv. p. 654.) Twenty kinds of flutes, the lyre, the magadis, the barbaton, the nobla, the pectis, the clepsiombos, the skindapsus, the pariambis, the psaltery, and the euneachordon: they played on all these like firstrate performers—*εμπειρῶς ἔχουσι καὶ τεχνικῶς*."

household deities, or fed with fragrant oil the lamps and candelabra that cast a mellow splendour over the entire scene.*

The strains of enchanting music which had guided the pilgrims from a distance, seemed to faint away and die in swanlike agonies, and all was still and breathless, as in a dream, when that venerable stranger and his disciple appeared upon the threshold of that hall of pleasure. Their eyes were downcast—and it was well—for ill would they have brooked to look upon mysteries of wantonness and unshadowed sin. The apostle lifted his hand as if in act to bless, saying, “Peace to this house!”—“And to all who dwell within it,” responded his disciple.

Like the summer-sea when the tornado breathes upon it, the lord of the feast sprang up. He shook his hands, he shrieked in transports of fury at the messengers who had come with a great blessing to his house; and they seized them and they cast them forth.

“O my divine Master! it is just!” said the venerable man, as he was lifted by his disciple from where they had left him for dead; “it is meet and congruous, for *thou*, also, didst come to thy own, and thy own received thee not, but disowned and rejected thee with ignominious injuries. Why, therefore, should not thy unworthy vicegerent, on entering his own city, for the first time, be treated like thee with insult? But suffer not, O Lord, that our first benediction in this predestinated see and metropolis of thy kingdom, shall prove abortive! Yes, they have rejected thy peace,” he continued, after a moment’s ecstasy, as he gazed upon the palace of Late-

* “Collocari jussit hominem in aureo lecto, strato pulcherime textili stragulo, magnificis operibus picto; abacosque complures ornavit argento, auroque cœlato. Tum ad mensam eximia forma pueros delectos jussit consistere, eosque nutum ejus intuentis diligenter ministrare. Aderant unguenta, coronæ, incendebantur odores; mensæ conquisitissimis epulis exstrebantur. Fortunatus sibi Damocles videbatur,” &c.—*Cic. Tusc. Quæst.* l. v. 21.

ranus, (for Platius Lateranus was the lord of the palace and the feast,) “ and, therefore, that proud pile shall fall ; but, upon its ruins shall rise the mother and the queen of a regenerated world ! ”*

St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, “ shook the dust from his feet,” and, with his meek disciple and amanuensis, St. Mark, pursued his way rejoicing.†

* “ Proximum necem Plautii Laterani, consulis designati, Nero adjungit, adeo propere, ut non complecti liberos, non illud breve mortis arbitrium permetteret.”—*C. Tacit. Annal.* l. xv. cap. 60. It was thus the Lateran palace became the property of the emperors. It was given by Constantine the Great to Pope S. Sylvester, with other rich possessions in Rome and Italy, as we shall see hereafter.

† Even at the risk of anticipating, it may be better to state, at once, a few of the Protestant authorities for the fact of St. Peter’s having preached the gospel in Rome, and there fixed his see.

First, Dr. Pearson, bishop of Chester, in his “ *Dissertationes de Serie et Successione primor. Romæ Episcoporum*,” institutes the following proposition, (chap. vii.) “ That St. Peter was at Rome is proved by Ignatius, (disciple of St. John,) from Papias, (another disciple of the Apostles,) from S. Dionysius of Corinth, (who might have seen St. John,) from St. Irenæus, (disciple of St. Polycarp, disciple of St. John,) from Caius, a Roman priest, who flourished in the first half of the second century, from Clement of Alexandria, (Origen’s preceptor,) from Tertullian, (who wrote his *Apology* before the year 200,) from Origen, Cyprian, Lactantius, Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Julian the Apostate, Augustin, Palladius,” &c. “ Wherefore, *it is wonderful*,—mirum itaque,—that there could be found any to deny that Peter ever was at Rome.” He then proceeds with great acumen to discuss the authorities at length, and fortifies the mass of historical evidence by a variety of arguments so cogent as to make it plain, that nothing but the violence of polemics, in the sixteenth century, could have driven persons having any pretensions to learning to question this fact.—“ *Duobus tamen his posterioribus sæculis non defuerunt viri docti, qui cum viderent Pontificiæ potestatis assertores hac successione maximè gloriari, primo de ipsâ successione dubitarunt*,” &c.

Secondly, Samuel Basnage, in his “ *Annales Politico Ecclesiastici*,” tom. i. p. 728, says, “ There never was a tradition sustained by a greater number of witnesses, than that which states St. Peter to have preached at Rome ; so that it is not possible to deny it.”—“ *Neque unquam traditio fuit que majori testium numero cingatur; ut de Petri in urbem adventu dubitari non possit.*” Having, then, like Dr. Pearson, adduced the historical proofs, and a number of powerful arguments, he shows how easy it is to answer the objections against the fact, which are all of a negative description.—

“ Unum nobis est argumentum ;” he concludes, “ *fama constans*, in quo etiam fundamento collocatur quæ per animos pervasit, *de Petri in urbem et adventu, et morte, immotu explorataque veterum sententia.*”

Hence, as the circumstances of St. Peter’s arrival, labours, and death in Rome will be found further on, the subject may be dismissed for the present, with the observation of the erudite German evangelical, Neander,—“ It is *hypercritical* to call in question the tradition preserved by the *harmonious testimony of ecclesiastical antiquity*, that St. Peter was at Rome.”—*Hist. of the Ch. Rel. and Church, &c.*, vol. i. of *Rose’s Transl.* The statement of Eusebius, as to the date of St. Peter’s arrival in the city, is followed, for reasons to be stated hereafter; the description of St. Peter’s personal appearance is partly from Eusebius and partly from documents given in the *Acta Sanctor.* 29° Junii.

CHAPTER VI.

“Affertur etiam de Sileno fabella quædam ; qui cùm a Mida captus esset, hoc ei muneris pro sua missione didisse scribitur : docuisse regem,—non nasci homini longe optimum esse ; proximum autem, quam primum mori.”—*Cicero. Tusc. Quæst. I. 48.*

“The happiest lot of man is not to be,
And next in bliss is he who, soon as born,
From this vain world and all its sorrows free,
Shall whence he came with speediest foot return.”
Sophocles, Chorus in Oedipus Colonos.

THRASEA PETUS.—“Whom the gods love die young, Servilius; for instance, who has not heard of Tropionius and Agamedes, who built Apollo’s temple at Delphi? Prostrate before the shrine they besought the god; not, indeed, for any trifling recompense, nor yet for anything definite, but, in general terms, for the best blessing that could be conferred on mortals. To whom Apollo promised, that the object of their prayer should be granted them, on the morning of the third day from thence—when it dawned, both were found dead.”*

LUCAN.—“Again; there were the two sons of Argias,—Cleobis and Biton. The story is well known. On a great festival, their father set out in the lofty chariot in which it was his privilege, as a priest, to be drawn when going to sacrifice; between the town and the temple, while yet a good distance from the latter, the oxen stopped, and refused to go any further. It was then that the two youths, above-mentioned, stripped off their garments, and having anointed their bodies with oil, yoked themselves to the chariot, and

* The substance of this conversation is taken from the first book of the “Tusculan Questions.”

so drew Argias, their father, to the temple. When arrived, he is said to have implored the goddess to grant his sons, in requital of their piety, the greatest blessing in her gift. After feasting sumptuously with their mother, they went to sleep, and were found dead in the morning."

SENECA.—“ Besides, Annæus, what signifies the longest life? What is infancy to-day is youthhood to-morrow, and, in the career of existence, old age, with swift and silent stride, pursues, and has overtaken us before we dream that he is near. From the waters of the Hypanis, which flow from Europe into Pontus, we learn from Aristotle, that little insects are generated which live but a day. Now one of these that perishes, say at the eighth hour, may be said to have died advanced in age; and that one sees decrepitude which survives till sunset. Compare with eternity the most protracted life, and does not our span of being seem brief as that of the *ephemeral* insect?”

CAIUS CASSIUS.—“ O Theramenes, how it delights one to remember thee! for though tears may be shed over the page where it is recorded, there is nothing in the death of the magnanimous to be deplored. Like a thirsting reaper, he quaffed the hemlock sent him by the ‘Thirty Tyrants,’ and dashing the dregs upon the floor of his dungeon, so that they sounded; ‘there,’ said he, ‘is to Critias, the beautiful,’ alluding, in irony, to the ugliness of that worst tyrant of the Thirty. See, how he made light of death! And not long after Socrates, in the self-same dungeon, received his death-potion; and what was his speech on hearing his sentence?—‘Great is my good fortune, judges, in being condemned to die, for either of two things is inevitable. Either death is the termination of all consciousness; or it is, merely, a migration to some other state of being; if an eternal sleep—albeit without even a dreamy consciousness—still, ye gods! what a blessing is it to die! or, how many are the days of this conscious state, that are preferable to that oblivious night? But if, on the other hand,

what they say be true, ('*Sin vera sunt quæ dicuntur*,') and death be, indeed, the portal of another world ; how fortunate to carry one's own appeal from an unjust sentence before a tribunal, where those who bear the name of judges do not disgrace it ? To you, sirs, a voyage of discovery such as this may seem but little to be envied. But is it not worth while to make some venture even for the *chance* of an interview with Orpheus, Musæus, Homer ? It is not once, but many times, if that were possible, I would be content to die, were death to bring me to such society."

PETUS.—"Life ! alas, what is it but a loan held at the caprice of nature?"

CASSIUS.—"It is even worse, Thrasea ! It is a despotism, fawned on by the base, while the magnanimous ever rejoice, as Cato did, in an honourable pretence to cast it off. But if, at all times, these aphorisms of the schools be true, what must be their tenfold cogency at a crisis, when Rome lies crouching at the feet of Agrippina ? Such accidental circumstances may attach to life, as to make it tolerable ; or as even to invest it with, at least, the verisimilitude of happiness. Ye gods ! to see the mighty spirits ('*illustres animas*'*) who built up this eternal city and exalted the Roman name above the stars ! But there are no Romans now ! The last of them fell at Philippi. Like their own eagle, they were fond of stormy liberty. It rocked their repose and sustained the flights of their ambition. If caged in sunny calm and servile security, they would burst the chain—or perish ! O Timotheus ! thrice happy, yet lamented boy ; a premature, and, therefore, an enviable death has rescued *thee*, not only from the ordinary ills of life, but from the inexpiable disgrace of acquiescing in the degradation of thy country."

Such was the tenor of the reflections by which his friends endeavoured to beguile the grief of Servilius Pudens, a venerable senator, from whose embrace a

* Virgil. *Æn.* iv.

son and heir—a youth of extraordinary promise—had been torn away by death, the very day he had received the “manly toga.” The obsequies celebrated from the first with patrician pomp, and with the prodigality of a distracted fondness, had been resumed with increasing ardour, as night, for the third time, expanded her wings above the house of mourning; and like the sounds of a distant ocean, one time swelling, another time subsiding, to return anon with a hoarser and louder roar,—the reverberations of the mirth and Saturnian revelry that reigned in every triclinium, saloon, and atrium of the immense palace—were audible at intervals even in the remote apartment where the afflicted Pudens had retired with the most illustrious of his kindred and acquaintance.

Among the latter were nearly all the most distinguished characters of the age; for Pudens, like Pomponius Atticus, had the singular good fortune to be courted and esteemed by the best and greatest of all parties. Of a stoical and majestic bearing—enhanced perhaps by the solemnity of the occasion—at the first glance, or to the inexperienced, they looked like “the little senate” collected round Cato at Utica to solemnize the obsequies of freedom. But a steadier and more searching gaze, and almost every trait of resemblance vanished. “*Magis esse quam videri*,” was the maxim in Cato’s day; but morals had been inverted, and “not to be, but seem,” was now the reading. It was not that the stuff, or substance of the men was of a baser quality. As it was, they were extraordinary men; they would have been great men, if cast in the mould of other ages; but it was their destiny to have fallen upon times, when a lurid despotism had interdicted every field of honourable enterprise and emulation, and constrained even such as were by nature inclined to nobility of thought and action to assume the disguise of worthlessness and depravity.

“I am not unconscious,” says the annalist of this dark epoch, “that most of what I have related al-

ready, and of what yet remains untold, will appear too despicable and obscure to be emblazoned on the historic page. But let no one think of contrasting the annals which we compose with those which record the achievements of the Roman people in the days of their independence. Mighty wars, the conquest of cities, kings vanquished and led in triumph, the rivalries of haughty consuls and of still prouder tribunes, gigantic struggles between the plebs and the patricians for ascendancy,—these were the themes afforded to him whose enviable lot it was to expatriate on the foreign conquests and domestic transactions of a free and mighty commonwealth ; but ignominious is the toil to which we are doomed, who have to creep through the foul and contaminating intrigues of courtezans and eunuchs in order to come at the truth—to consult the archives of the lupanar for the affairs of the Roman people, and weave the tissue of our history from the crimes of execrable despots."

Under auspices of this description, the only road to preferment, or of escape from ruin, was to ape the villainies of Sejanus, to worship the fantastic atrocities of Caligula as if they were so many outbursts of that latent divinity to which he laid claim—to seem edified at the incredible infamies of the ruling gods and goddesses of the Palatine. To be suspected of any leaning to virtue was fatal. Integrity was high treason—an audacious insult to the deified genius of Cæsar, whose prerogative it was to outrage every ordinance of reason, and to desecrate whatever nature herself has hallowed as most inviolable sacraments. Neutrality would not do—nothing short of hearty plaudits of the most hideous wickedness. To be only lukewarm in adulation, was to be noted with the disaffected.

When the panegyric written by Seneca of his pupil, the young emperor Nero, for having caused his own mother to be murdered, was recited in the senate, acclamations burst from all sides of the house, and it was voted by the conscript fathers that the natal day

of the unfortunate Agrippina should be held in eternal infamy ; that thanksgivings should be made to the immortal gods for having blessed the empire with such a prince as her son, and that beside a golden image of Minerva to be placed in the curia, a statue of the matricide should be erected, to indicate that he drew his inspirations, particularly in getting rid of his mother, from the goddess of wisdom herself.

Upon this, Thrasea Petus, who had usually permitted such adulatory proceedings to pass without observation, or with a mere expression of assent, rose up and left the temple ; “ thus provoking his own ruin,” says Tacitus, “ without giving what was expected from him, a word to some who were eager to strike a blow for liberty.”

He knew that his doom impended. While he sat in company with the most illustrious noblemen and ladies of Rome, enjoying the even tide—so delicious in the mellow sunshine of the pavilions where they feasted—it was surmised, from the solemnity of his air, and from certain catches of the conversation in which he was engaged with Demetrius, a Greek philosopher, that his thoughts were on the other world. And, true enough, it was not long till the fatal news arrived ; for one of his friends, Domitius Cæslianus, came in great trepidation to apprise him that he was condemned to die.

Lamentations and tears burst forth on every side ; but Thrasea, unmoved for himself, conjured his friends to retire speedily, lest treasonable sympathies might involve them in his ruin ; and when Arria was preparing, after her mother’s example, to share the fate of her noble spouse, he commanded her to preserve a life, now more prized by him than ever, as the only safeguard remaining for their child, destined as she was so soon to become an orphan.

He then proceeded to the portico at the front entrance of his villa, where the questor found him seemingly regardless of his own doom, in the delight with which he learned that his nephew, Helvidius, was to

be only exiled from Italy. After receiving his death-warrant, taking with him Helvidius and Demetrius the Greek, he retired into his own chamber and had the arteries of his arms opened. And, when the blood spouted on the pavement as he held his arms extended, he called to the questor to approach, saying, “*Libamus Jovi Liberatori*”—“This is to Jove the Liberator.” Seeing the officer turn aside, to hide his emotion, he added,—“Nay, look on, good Sir, for thou hast fallen upon days, when it behoveth thee to study how to die with fortitude.”

A fate similar to this was in store for almost every one of the patricians now assembled in the remote triclinium.

Lucius Annaeus Seneca, then in the meridian of court favour, as tutor to Nero—adopted by the stupid Claudius, to the exclusism of his own son and rightful heir, Britannicus, through the contrivance of Agrippina—the youthful poet, Lucanus Annaeus, who had the fatal gift of genius; Herennius, Senecio, Silenus, Rubellius Plautus, Subrius Flavinus, with several others then present, fell victims to envy, or suspicion, or wanton barbarity, during the next reign. The only one who escaped a violent end (and it was suspected by many that even he was poisoned)* was Afranius Burrhus, a veteran officer, and a creature of Agrippina’s, who had prevailed on her idiot uncle and husband, the emperor, to appoint him sole prefect of the Praetorian guards. As to Caius Cassius, the inheritor not only of the name, but of the haughty execration of tyrants, of his celebrated kinsman—impossible that he could escape. His immense property, his fame, or the pristine austerity for which he was remarkable, would alone have sufficed to ruin him.

The founder of the empire and of the Julian dynasty, had been the foe of the patrician oligarchy even from his youth; a prime favourite and a friend of the people. The prestige of his genius, even in this

* C. Tacit. Ann. l. xiv. 51.

respect, made itself felt by the great grandsons of those whose proud crests he had humbled at Pharsalia. The flower of the nobility had been cut down during their long and sanguinary fight, not for freedom, but for their own tyrannous monopoly of power ; and it is remarked by an historian of their order, that after the battle of Actium the giant spirits of the old time appear no more. But dread is ever whispering precaution to usurpers. From the Roman people, or rather from the rabble millions, who knew and cared for no country but the Circus—valued no franchise but that of being fed and feasted at the public expense ; the crafty Augustus, and his still more crafty successor, knew well that they had nothing to apprehend ; still less from the cringing servility of the middle class, mostly composed of freed men without principle or love of country. Their administration was popular in the provinces ; which, “ long oppressed by the ministers of the republic, had sighed for the government of a single person, who would be the master, not the accomplice, of petty tyrants.”* The rich and polite Italians, who had almost universally embraced the philosophy of Epicurus, enjoyed the charms of ease and tranquillity, without suffering the pleasing dream to be interrupted by the memory of their old tumultuous freedom. Thus was despotism at leisure to fix its jealous eye upon the senate, the only influence from which it had anything to apprehend.† The great aim of Cæsar had been to degrade it ; under the pretence of restoring its dignity Augustus contrived to annihilate its independence altogether ; and these arts had worked so well, that Tiberius himself was disgusted, or feigned to be so, with the spontaneous servility of the descendants of Cato and the Scipios. Seldom did he dismiss the assembly, not of kings but of sycophants, without exclaiming, “ O homines ad servitutem paratos !”

* Gibbon’s Hist. of Dec. and Fall, ch. iii. p. 71.

† Ibid., ch. iii. p. 72.

But it was in vain that the once haughty lords of the Roman world cast themselves down and fawned upon the heel, that, not only trampled on their hearts, but left its hateful track upon the honour of their wives, their daughters, and even of their patrician heirs. Cruel as were the oppressions, and the incessant fears by which they were tormented, while Tiberius abode in the city, or moved from villa to villa in the vicinity, like a hyena round his lair, they were but trifles compared to their lot, when retiring into voluptuous solitudes, the better to indulge his abominable passions, the tyrant abandoned the aristocracy to such minions as Sejanus. So direful was his reign of terror, that all social intercourse, convivial meetings, conversation, and even the interchange of common civilities between the nearest kindred and friends, was interrupted; consternation and reciprocal distrust having so seized on men's souls that the stoutest spoke in whispers, looking round them tremblingly as if the very statues and mosaics could betray them.* From wherever the frown of Sejanus fell, all fled, as from a devoted spot; whomsoever he hinted, or glared at in anger, was shunned and forsaken—as if devoted to the infernal gods. The thoroughfares and the forum were emptied at his approach, and their solitude spoke more emphatically, when from this recess and the other, a few wretches crept back and showed themselves, through dread of the consequences of having betrayed that they dreaded him—"quidam regrediebantur, ostendebantque se rursum, *id ipsum paventes, quod timuissent.*"† No day passed without its bloody tragedy; nor was any moment or place, however sacred, respected by the ministers of blood. The hatchet of the lictor fell upon the brow wreathed to offer sacrifice; the bow-string interrupted the half-

* "Congressus, colloquia, notæ, ignotæque aures, vitari; etiam muta atque inania, tectum et parietes circumspectabantur."—*Tacit. Ann. l. iv. 69.*

† "V. Quem enim diem vacuum poenâ, ubi inter sacra et vota, quo tempore verbis etiam profanis abstineri mos esset, vincla et laqueus inducantur."—*Tacit. cap. 70.*

uttered vows of many a votary ; and thus were the very sanctuaries, where no loud word should be heard, profaned by the cries of both the executioners and those whom they slew or dragged away in chains.

These sufferings of the aristocracy do not seem to have excited the slightest pity, either on the part of the provincials, with whom they never had cultivated any relations but those of arrogance and rapacity, or on the part of the populace—who inheriting the old grudge and hostility of the plebs against their antagonists in the commonwealth, and rendered pitiless and savage by the cruel sights of the amphitheatre, were ready with clamorous “salves” and acclamations for the blackest criminal, provided he only lavished the public treasures in largesses and shows. There was a rivalry between the greatest cities of the empire, from the borders of Lusitania to Asia Minor, for the privilege of consecrating temples and religious rites to Tiberius, at the time his hands were dripping with patrician blood. Caligula never ceased to be a favourite with the Roman populace ; they continued long after his death to strew flowers on the tomb of Nero. Nor was the bearing of the patricians made less harsh, or their sympathies in any degree awakened towards their dependants and slaves, by their own acquaintance with adversity.

Even in the best days of the republic, the Romans treated their slaves with excessive arrogance and barbarity.* Cato the censor, that pink of republicans, speculated in droves of war captives—the flower of European bravery—as if they were steers or horses, and never failed to get rid of them when they ceased to be worth foddering. These wretched beings were generally worked in fetters under the incitement of the lash, and at night they were driven into dreary

* “*Servi si prodant, possumus singuli inter plures, tuti inter anxios, postremo, si pereundum sit, non inulti inter nocentes agere. Suspecta majoribus nostris fuere ingenia servorum.*”—*From the Speech of C. Cassius, ap. Tacit. Ann. I. xiv. 44.*

“We have shown that Cato the Censor treated slaves worse than we are accustomed to treat horses.”—*Cal. Cyclop.* No. 50. *Rome*, vol. i. p. 239.

caverns, called “ergastula,” under ground. There is in the outpourings even of Marcus Tullius Cicero against the slaves, an acerbity and sanctimonious scorn, which no language but his own can adequately express. “We are threatened by the haruspices with the divine anger,” he says, “because the public games of circus and arena have been neglected and profaned. At the Megalensian games, so sacred, have you not suffered to be present, among the spectators, *slaves*? And if the immortal gods were visibly to descend amongst us to designate and set a mark upon that profanation by which their ire has been enkindled, what could they light upon more foul and abominable than that the amphitheatre and circus, where the Roman people worship them, should be polluted by the presence of your slaves?—Quid magis deformatum, inquinatum, perversum, conturbatum dici potest.”*

The miseries of the slaves were multiplied in the same ratio with their numbers. “Our ancestors,” said Caius Cassius, one of Pudens’ guests, when it was debated in the senate whether all the household slaves of Pedanius Secundus should be put to death, because one out of the four hundred had stabbed his master, who had denied him the manumission for which he had paid him in hard money, besides violating his betrothed,—“Our ancestors,” said Cassius, “never failed to hold in discreet suspicion even such among their slaves as had contracted a sort of kindred and claim to partiality, by having been born and brought up on the same estates and under the same roofs with themselves. But since we nobles have surrounded ourselves with households, more like nations than families, (‘naciones in familias habemus,’) it has been found impossible, without resorting to terror and coercive severity, to keep down a crew of rascals made up of the most heterogeneous elements, of conflicting habits, languages, and dispositions, either prone to some outlandish superstitions of their own, or without any religion whatsoever. It is objected that,

* *Oratio de Harusp. Respon. xii.*

in this indiscriminate execution, females, children, and old men, many who are undoubtedly innocent, will perish. And when a legion is decimated, does not the club fall upon many a hero's head? No, far from being an objection, the fact that with the guilty the innocent are to be involved, only classes this execution in the category of great state expedients, from which some admixture of injustice would seem to be inseparable.”*

Odious in the extreme must have been the character and temperament of an aristocracy imbued and actuated by such feelings, especially when exasperated by political annoyances, and totally estranged from every restraint of conscience. Each young patrician grew up surrounded by the same baseness and provocations to every tyrannous caprice that formed a Caligula and a Nero. Every great house had its Sejanus—his villainy the more intense from being exerted in a narrower sphere—each had its pimps, its foul intrigues, its sorceries, sanguinary arts of divination, its Caprean mysteries and incestuous revels. Each patrician tyrant dispensed the terror he himself was made to feel abroad, within the precincts of his little empire; he had his lictors, not of the axe but the poignard—ever prompt as it was stealthy in execution; and where the stiletto could not reach, he had his functionary to mingle assassination in the enticing cup. No Roman, much less a noble, made a show of himself in the olden time. They left that to slaves or degenerate aliens, and to practise on the stage or the arena was to contract the legal stain of infamy; but, at the time in question, it was fashionable for the young noblesse to superintend the training of their own gladiators, chiefly at Capua and Ravenna, selected on account of their well supplied markets and salubrious air, as the best situation for the “schools.” Many of noble lineage

* Tacit. Ann. l. iv. 42 and 43. Pliny the elder, Hist. Nat. xxxiii. 10, mentions that one Claudius Isodorus was at his death possessed of 4,116 slaves, notwithstanding that he had lost great numbers in the civil wars.

designedly perpetrated some crime to which the penalty annexed was forfeiture of honour and citizenship, in order to be legally qualified to appear as gladiators or pantomimes themselves; and, dead to the fame of Lucretia and the daughter of Virginius, the patrician dames resorted to subterfuges and profligacy still more infamous.*

The effects of these deep-seated disorders had become intolerable. It was felt that they were eating into the marrow of society; and from the second half of the reign of Tiberius nothing was talked of but reform.† All who had any thought or solicitude beyond the sty of Epicurus, a horse race, or a match of gladiators, beheld with impotent consternation the hourly augmenting ravages of evils that obviously transcended all human remedy, and foreboded ruin not only to the Roman state but to mankind. It was a saying, which Horace had often heard reiterated at the feasts of the *Æsquilian*, that the fall of the republic and all the consequent calamities that afflicted Italy were to be traced to the decay of religion; and that the only hope of sustaining the empire was by reviving the institutions of Numa and that religious enthusiasm, which for so many ages had knit the commonwealth into one well-nerved body and made its every effort irresistible.‡

* “Nil erit ulterius, quod nostris moribus addat,
Posteritas—

Omne in præcipiti vitium stetit.” *Juvenal.*

† So far back as the consulship of C. Sulpicius and D. Haterius, A. U. C. 775, A. D. 22, the *Ædiles* complained to the senate, the senate to Tiberius, that demoralization and excesses had arisen to such a pitch, that—“Nec mediocribus remediis sisti posse.”—*Tacit. Ann. l. iii. 52.*

‡ “Numa trovando un popolo ferocissimo e volendolo ridurre nelle obbedienze civile con le arte della pace, si volse alla religione, come cosa al tutto necessaria, a voler mantener una civiltà, e la ordino in modo che per più secoli non fu mai tanto timore di Dio quanto in quella repubblica. Il che facilitò qualunque impresa, che il senato, e quei grandi uomini Romani disegnassero fare.”—*Discorsi di Machiavelli, sopra la 1^a deca di Tit. Livio, l. i. 11.*

CHAPTER VII.

“ Quam volumus licet, patres conscripti, ipsi nos amemus ; tamen nec numero Hispanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Poenos, nec artibus Graecos, nec denique hoc ipso hujus gentis ac terræ domestico nativoque sensu, Italos ipsos ac Latinos, sed *pietate ac religione*, atque hâc unâ sapientiâ, quod deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, *omnes gentes nationesque superavimus.*”—*M. T. Cicer. Oratio de Harusp. Resp. ix.*

“ Considerato adunque tutto, conchiudo che la religione introdotta da Numa fu trâ la prime cogione della felicità di quella città—E come l’osservanza del colto divino è cogione della grandezza della repubblica ; così il dispregio di quella è cogione della rovina dessa.”—*Discorsi di Machiavelli, sopra la 1^a deca di Tit. Livio, l. i. 11.*

THE unanimity with which the first place is awarded to religion among the causes that contributed to the aggrandizement of Rome will not appear surprising, if it be recollected that the system of Numa and his successors was most admirably devised,—first of all, to foster profound superstition among the people ; secondly, to make Rome, or a certain “ideal” of country, the grand object of that superstition ; and, finally, if it be recollected, that the main springs of all this blind enthusiasm were confided to the hands, not of any sacerdotal caste, but to such individuals of the aristocracy as happened for the time being to be invested with the management of the state. “ The which,” according to one of the keenest and most profound thinkers upon politics, “ facilitated whatever enterprise the senate or the great generals determined to set on foot.”

That every thing in public and private life, domestic and rural economy, the months and seasons of the year, the days of the week, springs, rivers, groves, and mountains, were under the immediate tutelage of peculiar deities, was sedulously impressed upon the

plebeian herd ; there were town gods, and country gods, household gods, gods for gardens, for boundaries, gods for every place and proceeding, even the most sordid, iniquitous, and absurd ;* in the flight of birds, in the sound of thunder, in lightning, in dreams, in making a false step, in meeting this body or that ; in short, at every hand's turn and whimsical incident, they were taught to recognise some revelation of the divine will. To such a festering state of sensibility was the victim of superstition brought that his spirit never enjoyed repose, and was at all times susceptible of whatever impressions best served the purposes of those who had the management of the auspices. "This supernatural terrorism," says Cicero, "urges and bears down upon us, and to whatever side we turn still pursues us—whether the voice of a soothsayer or some sound considered ominous strike the ear ; whether the entrails of a victim palpitate, or a bird directs its flight in this or the other way ; whether a Caldee or an Etruscan meet you ; if it lighten, if it thunder ; if a blight fall on any thing ; if any thing is born or occur in any respect out of the common run. Sleep itself," he says, "which ought to be the solace of care-worn nature, becomes the most teeming source of anxiety and apprehension."†

It was by imagination temples were built in Greece ; in Rome they were erected by state policy. Every thing in Roman polytheism was political. Not only their public worship and every thing directly or indirectly connected with it, but the gods themselves were made amenable to the decrees of the senate and the people ; the number, relative honours, priesthoods, ceremonies, whether they should or should not be gods, was regulated by legislative enactments. All the institutions of Numa and Coruncanus had for

* "Magnorum fluviumve (says Seneca,) Capita reveremur ; subita et ex abdito vasti amnis eruptio aras habet ; coluntur aquarum calentium fontes, et stagna quædam, vel opacitas, vel immensa altitudo sacravit."—Ep. 41. Vid. Suet. in sub Aug. Also Pliny's Description of the Temple of Clitumn, b. viii. sec. 8.

† De Divinat. 1. ii. 72.

object, first to concentrate the heterogeneous superstitions that swayed the plebeian mind into an all-absorbing interest, called patriotism, or devotedness to country, of which Rome was the visible impersonation ; and, then, to make certain elected members of the patrician order the oracles of the gods, as to how Rome was to be served. " And as a sensual worship of nature," says Schlegel, " eminently characterised the poetical religion of the Greeks—as the abusive rites of magic were peculiar to the false mysteries of Egypt—so this third and greatest aberration of paganism,—political idolatry in its most frightful shape,—formed the distinguishing character and leading principle of the Roman state, from the earliest to the latest period of its history."*

From the earliest ages, Rome was filled with temples and altars ; the common object of them all was to remind the people of the favours and marks of predilection manifested for their city by the supernatural powers. The public worship, besides the immolation of victims, was in great part made up of sanguinary shows and of athletic sports and games calculated to foster qualities that were of the last moment in a military state. Fortune, under a variety of designations, had many temples. The yearly round of festivals commemorated and as it were dramatized whatever was most striking in the origin and elder vicissitudes of the country. The Lucaries represented the opening of the asylum by Romulus, the Remures his remorse for the murder of his brother ; his apotheosis, or transformation into a god, was celebrated by games and slaughter of victims on the Quirinal. The Salian dances were in honour of the bucklers let fall from heaven by Mars in Numa's time for the defence of the Romans. The consular, or great games, kept alive the happy stratagem by which the founder of Rome secured the alliance of the Sabine virgins. Festivals of a merely astronomic import in their

* Schlegel, *Philosophy of History*, vol. i. p. 348. Robertson's Transl.

Etruscan origin became vehicles of history, and consequently of popular force, in their Roman adaptation. Thus the Carmentals, merely emblematic of the new year in Etruria, to the Roman brought back the imagery of that pastoral age, when the shepherd king Evander reigned in his hut upon the Palatine, four centuries before the foundation of the city, seven before the age of liberty, and eight before that of conquest. The Lupercalia renewed the boyish sports and youthful irregularities of the twin nurslings of the wolf. Twice every year the destruction of regal tyranny was vividly represented; when on each occasion the precipitate flight of the king of the sacrifices called forth such shouts as if Tarquin were again actually chased from the throne. To make the ceremony more impressive this king of the sacrifices was the only one of the priests disqualified from holding a civil or military office. Three holidays were devoted to the worship of Jupiter Latiaris, in memory of the confederation of all the Latin states under the headship of Rome; in other words, to eternize the winning of supremacy over banded Italy, which opened to Rome the conquest of the world. The ancient festival of plenty was transferred to Anna Perenna, the old woman who brought provisions to the Plebs when they retired to the "Mons Sacer." Thus was every thing contrived to make the Roman a creature of enthusiasm, and to foster and inflame in his soul the worship of his country. Every page of Roman history affords a proof of the success with which this policy was crowned. Whether ruin threatened from intestine strife, or a foreign enemy, it is still to the religion, *the piety*, of the Roman people the appeal is made in every crisis, and never without securing the sacrifice required.

When the wing commanded by Decius was giving way under the gallant onslaught of the Latins, from the side of Mount Vesuvius,—“Now is the hour for the aid of the gods!” he cried. “Up, high priest of the Roman people, and dictate the formula in which I

may devote myself to the infernal gods for the legions." Standing upon a falchion, with his head shrouded in his toga and his right hand raised beneath it up to his chin, he pronounced the formula prescribed by the pontifex :—" Janus, Jupiter, Mars our progenitor, Quirinus, Bellona, Lares, Dii Novensiles, gods of our fathers, gods who rule alike over us and over our enemies, gods of the infernal shades, to you I pray ; you I beseech to bless with force and victory the Roman people, to send on their enemies dread, horror, and death. In behalf of the Roman people and Quirites, the army, legions, allies of the Roman people and Quirites, thus do I devote the legions and allies of the enemies with myself to the infernal gods and to mother earth !" From that moment, mounted on his horse, he seemed to both armies the spirit of destruction rushing down upon the Latin ranks. Terror went before him. His troops were seized with the consul's inspiration ; and scarce a remnant of the Latin chivalry escaped their swords.* It was thus in the power of a general to render his legions irresistible ; for, according to Livy, " it was lawful for the consul, the dictator, or the prætor, when he contemplated devoting the hostile force to the deities of destruction, not only to offer up himself to the infernal gods, but also any others whom he chose of the legions ;" and we learn from Cicero that the instances were frequent in which whole armies thus devoted themselves to death.†

It was not such great acts of devotion alone that called for the interference of religion ; to be legal there was scarcely any public proceeding or private transaction that did not in some way or other require the intervention of the pontiffs. They judged in all causes relating to sacred things, to adoptions, to wills, they had the care of regulating the year and the public calendar, called fasti kalendares, and of designating

* L. x. 5. See also Cab. Cyclop. No. 50, Rome, vol. i. p. 73.

† " *Quoties non modo ductores nostri, sed universi etiam exercitus ad non dubiam mortam concurrerunt?*"—Tusc. Quæst. l. i. 37.

what days were *fasti* and what *nefasti*, by which means they could at pleasure suspend all public business ; in cases where there was no written law, they prescribed what regulations they thought proper. Another immense source of influence was derived from the necessity of their concurrence for assembling the comitia, or holding popular meetings, and their right to preside over them. Hence the comitia were said to be held, or what was decreed in them to be done " *apud pontifices*," or " *pro collegio pontificum*," in presence of the pontiffs. Dionysius of Halicarnassus says, that they were not subject to any power in the state, nor responsible for their conduct either to the senate or people. Over this supreme college, originally composed of four, then of eight, then of fifteen, and, under the empire, of an indefinite number of members, there presided the Pontifex Maximus, or supreme pontiff, who held uncontrolled jurisdiction, with the power of life and death, over all the other sacerdotal colleges—over the Augurs, the Haruspices, the Sibylline Interpreters, called " *Quindecim viri sacris facundis*," over the Epulones, over the Fratres arvales, over the Curiones, over the Fecials, over the priests of Tatius, of Romulus, of Hercules, of Pan, of Mars ; over the Corybantes or priests of Cybele, over the Vestals, the Rex Sacrorum, or King of the sacrifices, and even over the Flamen Dialis, or priest of Jupiter. This supreme pontiff was for life ; he regulated every thing in religion without appeal ; he could hinder any priest from leaving the city, although invested with consular authority ; nothing, therefore, can be more evident than that in the Pontifex Maximus and his college resided the supreme power. Now from this dignity and from the sacerdotal colleges generally the Roman people were jealously excluded. Up to the year of the city 454, the priesthood was entirely monopolised by the patricians ; and when this, like the other institutions, was at last forced open, only such of the plebeian order as had been raised to the rank of senators were admitted.

But the main spring by which the patricians contrived to work the machinery of superstition, so versatile and all-powerful, was the auspices.* “Nil inauspicato” was the first principle of the Roman constitution. Nothing of importance, either in peace or war, could be undertaken legally but by the dictate of those who interpreted the omens and the Sibylline books; no eminence of desert or office could shield the functionary from impeachment, who had the impiety to act against them. These tokens of futurity were derived chiefly from five sources: from appearances in the heavens; from the singing or flight of birds; from the eating of chickens; from the entrails of quadrupeds; and from uncommon accidents, called *diræ*; and on extraordinary occasions from human victims, especially when Etruscans were called in. The birds which gave omens by their cries, were the raven, the crow, the owl, the cock; by flight, were the eagle, vulture, &c.; by feeding, chickens, much attended to in war. In the first Punic war, when the priest, who had charge of the chickens, told him that they would not eat, (a bad omen,) P. Claudius, admiral of the fleet, had them flung into the sea, saying, “If they will not eat, let them drink.” He engaged, in defiance of the omens, and, as might be anticipated, he was defeated, and lost nearly all his ships. The aristocracy held this institution closed against the people with greater jealousy than even the pontificate. No matter what crime an augur was guilty of, he could not be deprived of his office; no one was eligible to the college but a bosom-friend of all the members. Plutarch

* “Ac Romulus cum hæc egregia duo firmamenta reipublicæ peperisset, auspicia et senatum tantum est consecutus, ut deorum in numero conlocatus putaretur.”—Cicero *de Repub.* l. ii. 10, *Card. Mai's Disc.* tom. i.

“La rita della religione gentile era fondata sopra la setta degli Arioli e degli Auruspici, tutti le altre loro ceremonie sacrificii e riti dipendevano di questi. Perchè essi facilmente credevano, che quel dio che potra predire il tuo futuro bene, e il tuo futuro male, te le potesse ancora concedere.”—Machiavelli, *Discorsi sopra la 1^a deca di Tit. Livio.*

tells us the reason :—“ They were intrusted with the secret or mystery of empire ; the last thread of the grand tissue of imposture was in their hands. They wielded a power devoutly recognised by the Roman population as divine. They set all the functions of the state in motion ; they could moderate, direct, or suspend the action of any one of them, as they saw fit. Even the wildest hurricane of sedition, in forum or camp, they could govern and suppress with facility.” Cæsar, who had no interest in this imposition, but the reverse, used to say, “ He wondered how two augurs could meet without bursting into laughter.”

To reinstate this old supremacy of the state-religion, taken up first by Mæcenas, and by Seneca in the present instance, continued to be the darling object of imperial policy until paganism was supplanted by Christianity, and of the old *Roman* factions in the empire even long after.* But many circumstances had combined to preclude the possibility of reinstating it. In the first place innumerable rivals had started up ; Rome had become “ the common temple of mankind ;” the deities of all the vanquished nations had been carried thither in the triumphal trains of her generals ; their rites and mysteries were there celebrated ; and if there were any gods not amongst the conquered, they were sure to be brought in by that principle which kept the devout polytheist ever uneasy, lest he should have missed paying his devoirs to any deity. Hence the Athenians, so remarkable for their piety, had an altar to the “ unknown God.”

The keen-sighted statesmen of the oligarchical ages had foreseen this evil. They spared no precaution to

* “ Delicta majorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec tempa refeceris,
Aedesque labentes deorum, et
Fœda nigro simulacra fumo.
Dis te minorem quod geris, imperas.
Hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum.
Dñi multa neglecti dederunt
Hesperiæ mala luctuosæ.”

Horat. l. iii. Car. 6.

preserve the unity of religion. The laws of the twelve tables were rigid on this point, interdicting all separate worship and religious innovation ; and lustrum after lustrum, the ediles were charged to look to the enforcement of this law, “ to dislodge all foreign practitioners in fortune-telling, magic arts, and other exotic rites and sacrifices, from their haunts about the chief places of resort, the forum and circus, to drive them from the city ; to search up, and burn all books of vaticination, and to abolish all modes of worship not conformable to that established by law.”* But the inherent disorders of polytheism proved too much even for the senate. Conquerors of the world, they were vanquished by a tumultuous invasion of outlandish deities. It was in vain that even *Æmilius Paulus*, in the zenith of his glory, hatchet in hand, wielded his victorious arm to hew down the shrine of Serapis. Repulsed from the city, the invaders rallied beyond the pomerium. Dissent seemed to prosper by the violence used to enforce conformity ; forsaking the established worship, crowds poured out to the conventicles of Isis and Anubis ; and when their votaries had sufficiently ascertained their own strength, the penal laws were set at defiance, and the proscribed deities triumphantly reinstated. Beside the old-fashioned impostures of Numa, those of Thebes and the City of the Sun took their place. Jove had long removed his court from Olympus to the Capitol. From all regions his vassals trooped after him. Every street and forum was studded with shrines and altars, and thronged with sorcerers, magicians, the hierophants and charlatans of all the impure and atrocious mysteries of oriental countries, and especially of the Nile. “ Thus did this city, here-

* “ *Separatim nemo habesset deos ; neve novos, neve advenas, nisi publice adscitos, privatim colunto.*”—*Law of the Twelve Tables, quoted by M. T. Cicero, de Legib. l. ii. 8.*

“ *Quoties hoc patrum avorumque ætate negotium est magistratibus datum, ut sacra externa fieri vetarent, sacrificulos vatesque foro, circu, urbi prohiberent ; vaticinos libros conquirerent, comburerentque ; omnem disciplinam sacrificandi, præterquam more Romano abolerent.*”—*T. Liv. Hist. l. xxxix. Speech of Posthumus.*

tofore so rigid in its observances, so reserved in its opinions, and which had in a manner scrupulously reformed the polytheism of Greece, become the theatre of every licentious, bloody, and absurd superstition ; the earth groaned under the multitude of temples. Rome was said to contain more gods than citizens, more idols than adorers ; and as it was not the genius of polytheism to erect one worship on the ruins of another, but to agglomerate them all and practise them simultaneously, the grotesque follies, infamies, clashing attributes, incongruities and contradictions, became so glaring, that they forced themselves upon the attention even of the besotted herd."* But another influence, still more fatal to the state religion, was the diffusion of Greek scepticism ; chiefly through the philosophic writings of Cicero.

* Ben. Constant. du Polyth. Rom. l. iv. ch. 3.

CHAPTER VIII.

“Jurarem per Jovem Deosque Penates me et ardere studio veri reperiendi, et ea sentire quæ dicerem.”—*M. T. Cicero, Acad. Quæst. 1. iv. 20.*

“In a word, he (Cicero) laughed at the opinions of the state, when he was amongst the philosophers; he laughed at the doctrines of the philosophers, when he was cajoling an assembly; and he laughed heartily at both when withdrawn among his friends in a corner.”—*Warburton, Divine Legat. b. iii. sec. 3.*

A MORE enthusiastic admirer of the grand system of imposture, there could not be than Marcus Tullius. How often is his eloquence poured out in praise of the unrivalled piety of the Roman people, and on the wisdom of their ancestors pre-eminently signalized in the matter of religion?* His devotion to the institutions of Scevola and Coruncanius is implicit. The auguries are not a less egregious blessing than the senate, nor less vital to the commonwealth. He is ready to defend the entire establishment at any risk; he inculcates the most unhesitating belief in their religion on his fellow citizens. In his harangues from the rostrum he constantly plays off the various deities, the omens, and responses, as they serve his turn; and whether he addresses the people through his tract on laws, or thunders “viva voce” against Cataline, or in pleading “for his house,” before the pontiff and his college in the hearing of a crowded court, Cicero is still the enthusiastic adorer of all the “immortal gods,” from Jove to Æsculapius; a zealot for every nicety of the “jus pontificium;”—the rubric, or canon law of the Capitol. But how different is the Cicero we meet

* “Ego verò primū habeo auctores ac magistros religionum calendarum majores nostros; quorum mihi tanta fuisse sapientia videtur, ut satis superque prudentes sint, qui illorum prudentiam, non dicam assequi, sed, quanta fuerit, perspicere possint.”—*Cic. Orat. de Harusp. Resp.*

with in the elegant suburban retreats of the initiated ? The “immortal gods,” before whom he fell prostrate in the Capitol, and apostrophised with upraised eyes and hands in the forum, are dethroned, derided, and *proved* to be but the creations of imposition. “What!” he exclaims, in the first of those philosophic lectures with which he entertained his friends at Tusculum, “has not all heaven been crowded to overflowing with mortals ? If we enter into old records, and avail ourselves of Greek research, shall we not find this to be the case even with respect to the gods, ‘*majorum gentium*’ as they are called ; that is, of Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, Neptune, Mars, Venus, &c. Ask how many of their graves can be pointed out in Greece ? Recollect (*for you have been initiated*) what they divulge in the *mysteries* ; and you will see to what an extent this applies.”* But it would have mattered little *to the state* how much Cicero descanted in an infidel strain, if he had had the discretion to reserve his scepticism for aristocratic company—for Varro, Atticus, for Cotta, the supreme pontiff, or for Lucullus, one of his colleagues ; because they, in common with the rest of the nobility, believed as little of, and laughed as heartily at, the state religion, as did Marcus Tullius himself. But Cicero’s overweening vanity instigated him to enter the lists with Plato in philosophy, after having contended for the palm of eloquence with

* “Quid ? totum propè cœlum ne plures persecuar, nonne humano genere completum est ? Si vero scrutari vetera, et ex his ea, quæ scriptores Græciæ prodiderunt, eruere coner ; ipsi illi, majorum gentium Dii qui habentur, hinc a nobis profecti in cœlum reperientur. Quære, quorum demonstrantur sepulchra in Græcia ; reminiscere, quoniam es initiatus, quæ tradantur mysteriis ; tum denique quam hoc late pateat, intelliges.”—*Cic. Tusc. Quæst. 1. i. 12, 13.*

And in another passage he is still more explicit :—“Quid ? qui aut fortes, aut claros, aut potentes viros tradunt post mortem ad deos pervenisse, eosque esse ipsos, quos nos colere, precari, venerare soleamus.—Ab Euhemero et mortes et sepulturæ demonstrantur deorum. Omitto Eleusiniam sanetam illam et augustam.—Prætero Samothraciam, eaque.

————— quæ Lemni
Nocturno aditu occulta coluntur,” &c.

Demosthenes ; and as it was long since philosophy, in its Grecian costume, had made atheists of the aristocracy, what wonder that plebeian faith was not proof against her seductive influence, when appearing in the forum and the cross-ways, decked out in the great orator's latinity ?*

Scattered throughout his writings generally, are detached passages, sarcasms, little pleasantries and anecdotes of a most caustic turn, which must have insensibly infected his readers with contempt for the state worship ; but it is in his great theological treatise “On the Nature of the Gods,” and in its supplement, the work on “Divination,” that he completely plays the Titan.

This extraordinary production purports to be Cicero’s report—in three books—of a conference between Velleius, a nobleman, addicted to the views of Epicurus ; Balbus, a Stoic ; and Cotta, like Marcus Tullius himself, a follower of the new Academy. It is supposed to take place, Cicero being merely a listener, while he and the other patricians, above-mentioned, are rusticating at one of his villas with Cotta, who was Pontifex Maximus at the time.

Velleius, the Epicurean, begins with a review of the long and august procession of the Theists, from “ancient Thales” down to Chrysippus, the *Coryphaeus* of the Stoicks of that day ; having analyzed the system of each, separately, at first, and pointed out its inconsistencies in detail, he then contrasts them with one another, to exhibit their innumerable absurdities in a more glaring light, and, designating the whole as a congeries of lunatic rhapsodies, rather than as philosophic systems, concludes by lauding Epicurus, and by endeavouring to demonstrate the superior wisdom of his theories. In this latter portion of his task, he is followed by the Pontifex Maximus, Cotta, who successfully assails the philosophy of the “Garden,” strips Epicurus of the disguise he had put on, for fear

* See Gibbon, vol. ii. p. 177.

of the Areopagus, and exposes the author of the “Treatise on the Sanctity of the Gods,” as a thorough-going atheist. The third book is the Supreme Pontiff’s refutation of the second, in which Balbus has adduced the arguments, moral, physical, and metaphysical, for the existence of the gods, and discoursed elaborately concerning providence.

After the dedication to his beloved Brutus, and the general introduction of the subject, Marcus Tullius had said : “ To secure myself against every charge or suspicion of partiality, or misstatement, I shall, in the first place, adduce the various opinions of the great sages, touching the nature of the gods, and then, as it were, convene the representatives of the respective systems, to determine which of them all is true ; and let us of the Academy, who look on nothing as certain, be thenceforth and for ever deemed impertinent, if the sects come to an agreement, or if any one of them supply peremptory proof as to where lies the truth.” That Cicero redeemed this pledge cannot be questioned ; he adduces all who maintained the belief of a deity, of immortality and of a providence, states their opinions fairly, tests the arguments pro and contra ; but so monstrous are the incongruities brought to light, that the obvious hopelessness of arriving at any satisfactory conclusion, by philosophical inquiry on that branch of human investigation universally looked upon as of the last importance, affords to Cicero a most triumphant argument in favour of the Academic theory—to wit ; “ That the groundwork and principle of philosophy is ignorance ; and that it is the part of a wise man to regard every thing as doubtful.”

It soon appeared whether or not the violent anxiety of the elder Cato to have Carneades, the founder of Cicero’s academy, and his fellow-ambassadors from Athens, hurried out of Rome as if infected with some fell pestilence. That rough old Tusculan would much rather have seen Hannibal again before the gates, than an impugner of the “immortal gods” within them.

He knew that the colossus of Roman grandeur had been reared by imposture, that it reposed upon ignorance ; and that ruin must ensue if light were once let in upon the plebeian masses. Hence his alarm at every approach of civilization, his denunciations of whatever could humanize or enlighten, were not the result of a crotchety bent, or of any inborn dislike to intellectuality ; for Cato was unrivalled as a statesman in an age of singularly great men ; he was erudite for his time, and mastered the Greek language when an old man ; but he knew that if freethinking once got footing among the people, there was an end of that enthusiasm and of those restraints without which the car of conquest could not be propelled, at least, safely, and upon which entirely rested the stability of Roman institutions. No doubt the avowed infidelity of Cæsar, and his industrious efforts to bring religion, like all other aristocratic institutions and bulwarks, into contempt, had helped the same object as Cicero's philosophic vanity ; nor were the rapid and turbulent changes in the sacerdotal colleges, during the long continuance of the revolution, without their influence. The state mystery became officially known to too great a number—not always of the most staid characters ; but, however it had occurred, certain it is, that, at the time we speak of, the established religion had fallen into hopeless decay ; and impostures grasped with faith by the heroes of the pristine ages, after the same fashion they grasped their falchions, were now so many laughingstocks to schoolboys and the mob.* Not that the latter, in losing the blind and undoubting reliance of the old warrior-burghers on the divinely-constituted authority of the state religion, had been emancipated from error, or brought nearer the truth. Quite the reverse. The master-piece of old Roman statesman-

* “Et quis tunc hominum contemptor numinis ? Aut quis
Simpluvium ridere Numæ, nigrumque catinum,
Et Vaticano fragiles de monte patellas
Ausus erat ? Sed nunc ad quas non Clodius aras ?”
Juvenal, Sat. vi.

ship consisted in this : that, out of the motley superstitions and myths of various populations, they had contrived to fabricate a *religion*, that is, a *binding power*, or combining influence, as the Roman word “ *religio*” implies ;* by which their state was not only held together, in spite of the most violent shocks and convulsions, but also made most observant of discipline, notwithstanding its fiery hostility to subjection, and enabled to act with irresistible unity and force. Now, all that Cicero and his coadjutors did was to loosen this binding power ; they showed that it was a mere rope of sand—a deception—and presently, the master-piece of state wisdom and industry relapsed into anarchy. But Marcus Tullius did not substitute a *true* binding power—a genuine “ *religio*”—for the false one he had destroyed. He created anarchy, but he could not reinstate order. He knew of no infallible basis of truth, of no sanctions, not from the Egeria of Pompilius, but from the authenticated “ *ipse dixit*” of the divinity. Hence, as the heart of man cannot do without a god, and as he is never so much at the mercy of superstitious sentiments as when he turns his back on the true divinity, it happened that the Romans were never such abject slaves of superstition as at the very time when they seemed to have turned sceptics. Instead of being subject, like their sires, to one—and that the best ordered and least demoralizing form of polytheism—the degenerate and corrupt slaves of the Cæsars, of all orders and degrees, had become the sport by turns of every foul and hateful influence that polytheism had engendered. “ Professing themselves to be wise they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into the likeness of the image of corruptible man, and of birds, and fourfooted beasts, and of creeping things. For this cause, God gave them up to vile affections,—to a reprobate sense, to do those things which are

* Cicero de Legib.

not convenient ;—being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice, wickedness, full of envy, murder, contentions, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, hateful of God, contumelious, proud, haughty, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, foolish, dissolute, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy.”*

* St. Paul’s character of the Romans of his times, *with the darkest shades left out!*

CHAPTER X.

“ What from this barren being do we reap ?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep.”

“ Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis ? Quid Academiæ et Ecclesiæ ? Quid hereticis et Christianis ? Nostra institutio de Porticu Salomonis est, qui et ipse tradiderat Dominum in simplicitate cordis esse querendum. Viderint qui Stoicum, et Platonicum et Dialecticum Christianismum protulerunt.”—*Tertull. de Præscrip.*

—“ TRUE it is,” pursued Seneca, in urging the revival of the established system, “ that Marcus Tullius disclaims the idea of subverting the religion of the state, while he subverts superstition ; and that he speaks of propagating a pure devotion to the one all-perfect and eternal Nature which the beauty of the universe and the order of the heavens proclaim.* But must not his familiarity with the writings of the greatest sages have convinced him, (as indeed the whole tenor of his public conduct proves it did,) that this idea of a pure disembodied religion, little else than a philosophic theory or speculation, is nothing better than a chimera when there is question of the common herd ?” After descanting on the uses of philosophy, for well regulated and enlightened minds, Timæus, the Locrian, thus continues :—“ But with respect to those of a rude and turbulent disposition, for them punishments must be resorted to ; both those

* “ Nec vero (id enim intelligi volo) superstitione tollenda religio tollitur. Nam et majorum instituta tueri sacris cæremoniisque retinendis, sapientis est ; et esse præstantem aliquam, æternamque naturam, et eam suscipiendam, admirandamque hominum generi, pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit confiteri. Quamobrem, ut religio propaganda etiam est, quæ est juncta cum cognitione naturæ ; sic superstitionis stirpes omnes ejiciendæ. Instat enim,” &c.—*De Divinatione*, l. ii. 72, pr. fin.

which civil laws inflict and those which religion denounces, as the chastisement of an over-ruling providence, and the torments destined for the wicked in the infernal regions. And for this reason I applaud the Ionic poet, (Hesiod,) who has contributed materially to the amelioration of mankind by recording in his verses the terrors of these realms of purgation and eternal woe, *as he collected them from old tradition.*"

"The multitude in society," says another, "are allured to virtue by these enticing fables, which the poets tell of ancient heroes! such as the labours of Hercules or Theseus, and of the rewards conferred upon the well-deserving, by the gods. On the other hand, they are restrained from vice by the punishments which the deities are said to inflict upon offenders, and by those terrors and threats impressed upon the soul, not only by denunciations, but by *awful exhibitions in the 'mysteries'; for it is impossible to govern women and common people, and to keep them holy, pious, and virtuous, by the precepts of philosophy.*"

And what does one of the greatest statesmen and historians, a man practically versed in all forms of government and modes of administration—a most acute observer of mankind—Polybius, write upon this very subject?

"The unrivalled superiority of the policy of the Romans, in my opinion, is most strikingly exhibited in what concerns religion, for what has been the ruin of other nations is the firmest support of their affairs; I mean piety, or superstition. Many may think this very strange, but to me it appears most admirably calculated to procure the public good. *If, indeed, one had to frame a constitution for a community of philosophers, it is possible that a system, such as that of which we treat, might not be necessary, but the multitude, being ever fickle, capricious, full of disorderly passions, and subject to irrational and violent resentments, there is no way left to keep them in order but by the terrors of future punishment, and by the pompous circumstance by which mythology is invested.* Hence it

appears to me, that the ancients acted with great judgment and wisdom when they incorporated these notions with the popular belief; and that the present age" (he alludes to Greece) "acts as absurdly and inconsiderately in removing them, and encouraging the multitude to despise them." The historian proceeds to demonstrate his views, by contrasting Greece, then degraded and irreligious, with Rome, triumphant and irresistible, because devoted at that period to the worship of the gods.*

"Yes, that philosophy is totally incompetent to discharge the functions of religion towards society is plain," observed Rubellius; "but does Seneca imagine they can be discharged by *an erroneous religion, unless perhaps for a season*—just as in time of famine, life is supported by unnatural sustenance, or traffic carried on by a fictitious medium? The ingenuity of statesmen may cloak the imperfection of the instruments they make use of to control, or turn the blind infatuation of their subjects to account; but in spite of chicanery, or of terrorism, sooner or later, the imposture must be unmasked, and when this happens its doom is sealed; the passions may rally round it, and redouble their efforts to sustain its tottering ascendancy, but down it must come.

"A true religion, on the other hand, while it is liable through ignorant excitement and prejudice to be rejected and treated with indignity, may, nay, *must* rally, and ultimately triumph, whenever the reign of enlightenment and candour are restored; for, as a little knowledge frequently leads men from religion, a great deal in general leads them back again; but to reinstate *a false religion* in an enlightened age is an utter impossibility. Free discussion, candour, the revival of good faith, and the extirpation of prejudice, are fatal to it. *While, therefore, I admit that it was by superstition our empire rose, I maintain that, by superstition, it cannot be reformed.*"

* Vide Polyb. Hist. l. vi. 54, 55.

“ And therefore,” exclaimed Cassius, “ was my first assertion just :—

‘ Who dies in youth and vigour dies the best,
 Struck through with wounds, all honest, on the breast ;
 But when the Fates, in fulness of their rage,
 Spurn the hoar head of unresisting age ;
 In dust the reverend lineaments deform,
 And pour to dogs the life-blood scarcely warm.—
 This, this is misery ! the last, the worst,
 That man can feel—*man fated to be cursed.*’*

“ The entire social system,” he continued with increasing vehemence, “ is based upon a lie,—interwoven with putid and despicable fables. The traditions of memory are a tissue of impostures ; baseless are the hopes and the apprehensions of futurity. Nor is there any redress for this perplexity. We are tantalized by phantoms which allure, as infallibly as they elude the grasp ; and when we have toiled and strained, to exhaustion, to attain to certainty, doubt, like the stone of Sisyphus, overpowers and drives us down again into the abyss ; again, to renew our mental torments and efforts with the same result.

“ Marcus Tullius and Plato may trumpet the praises of philosophy. If it be a blessing, why secrete it ? why not send forth their heaven-descended goddess to scatter light and healing from her wings ? But, why has she failed to bestow security of mind even upon her own most ardent votaries ; or how has it happened that the more they worship her, the more miserable they feel ;—that the farther they pursue her ever-fleeting form, the greater their bewilderment and want of certainty ? Vain ! utterly bootless is it, to inquire what Socrates, or Plato, or Aristotle, or Zeno, or Carneades *believed* ? *Belief*, there was none amongst them. Their faith consisted of conjectures ; theirs was a creed of probabilities—never did their intelligences seize upon truth with a fearless, brilliant, reasonable conviction. In their schools and learned

* Iliad, B. 24.

conferences they speculated gloriously, and argued with power ; but when their splendid professions were brought into cold, close contact with the ghastly problem of our being ; to the dull, fatal tug between immortality and annihilation—alas, for miserable, ill-starred humanity—doomed to be the jest and ludibrium of fate—the ‘ wisest of men’ has no solace from all his philosophy but this :—

“ ‘ The hour is come when we must depart from this prison-cell—I through the gate of death ; you, my friends, by that of life, still longer to enjoy existence ; but as to which is the better lot, the immortal gods may know : but that no mortal can tell, I am convinced.’ And Marcus Tullius, after all his sublime declamation in proof of the soul’s immortality, nay, of its divinity, comes to this :—‘ But in speculating on the soul’s destiny,’ he says, ‘ we are affected somewhat similarly to those who, from gazing intensely on the setting sun, become so dazzled as hardly to see anything at all ; so does it fare with the mind in contemplating itself—all power of fixing anything with precision is lost. Whereupon, bewildered, its unsteady ken is turned in every direction, full of hesitation, and doubt, and terror, as it finds itself drifting away like a bark guideless on the ocean’s immensity.’*

“ Instead of the visions which philosophy has taught us to deride, she gives us—can give us—nothing, in return, but a forlorn consciousness of ignorance and disappointment. Far from being a blessing or an enviable attribute, reason, as we are now circumstanced, is a bitter curse ; and, better far would it have been, had we never been endowed with a faculty, not to be exercised but with ruin to our happiness.† As to religion,

* “ Itaque dubitans, circumspectans, hæsitans, multa adversa revertens, tanquam in rate, in mare immenso, nostra vehitur oratio.”—*Tusc. Quæst.* l. i. 30.

† “ — Ut satius fuerit nullam omnino nobis a diis immortalibus datam esse rationem, quam tantâ cum pernicie datam.”—*Cicer. de Nat. Deor.* l. iii. 27.

it has only aggravated and multiplied the evils by which we are overwhelmed.*

“ May malediction, therefore, light upon the day of my nativity, and may it be drowned in bitterness. There is no God—no Providence—no hereafter. The only elysium is the ‘sty’ of Epicurus. Never, never will I believe, that it was by a deity, benign and superlatively wise, that man was brought to this extremity. No, nothing but a ruthless demon could have flung him into this terrestrial Tartarus,—apparently, for no fault of his,—without the possibility of liberation or redress.”

The rising of St. Peter, at this crisis, was like that of an apparition from the dead. Astonishment held the patricians mute; and, in spite of his rude garb and diction, their haughty spirits quailed under his words, which fell upon them like thunderbolts of inspiration. He discoursed upon Jesus of Nazareth; showed that he was the Christ, the deliverer, the promised, the long-expected, the Saviour, “the way, the truth, and the life;” the way rendered plain and unmistakable by his own example, and leading with infallible certainty to heaven;—the truth long searched for, in vain, by philosophy, now revealed *audibly* by God’s own mouth, to be held by faith upon authority, not scrutinized by the bankrupt and non-suited intellect;—the life, not derived, as by a stream, but self-existing as in the fountain-head, from all eternity. The aspect of humanity, heretofore so ghastly and inexplicable, under the new light that broke upon it, presented the spectacle, as it were, of a most complicated, diversified, but still harmonious drama, in which the wide-spread disorders, the innumerable crimes and catastrophes that occur, served only to display the wisdom of the injunction placed upon the first actors on the scene. How glorious was the plot that had been marred by disobedience! and how indispensable to the re-establishment of order was the interposition of a God! Little less astounding than to hear the problem solved with facility by a Jewish

* “ Religio peparit scelera atque impia facta,” &c.—*Lucretius*.

fisherman, which had baffled all the pride of Grecian genius and Roman judgment, was it to discover, by what a flimsy, transparent gauze of fiction, the origin and fall of man, with the rest of primeval truth, had lain concealed ; and how, if any one had but hit upon the correct type of religion, he might have collected, almost from Plato alone, the “ *disjecta membra*,” fragments of the divine original, scattered and mutilated, as if by demons, sufficient to reconstruct it.

Thus, will Plato make his founder of a perfect state, or social system, collect around him the few, the very few, in whom Providence has implanted its choicest gifts, showering them out, as it were, in some special revolution of nature. With them he will proceed to form a society *entirely new*. *He will take his future subjects as children, and rear them up under his own eye and upon his own principles.* He will distribute the powers of the state into two classes, the hierarchical, and the secular, to be called $\pi\mu\sigma\beta\acute{\nu}\tau\epsilon\mu\sigma$ and $\nu\epsilon\omega\tau\epsilon\mu\sigma$ —the one to preserve and promulgate the laws and the knowledge of God ; the other to defend the state from enemies without and within. *The great business of the hierarchical rulers will be instruction* ; they will watch over the rising character of the young, exercising and testing them with pains and pleasures, and studying to place each in that post fitted to his character. *They will bring down all castes,—castes of blood, of wealth, of profession, of fashion ; and leave, in all these barriers thrown up either by nature, or by the vanity of men, passages for goodness and wisdom to rise up to the highest ranks, and for evil and ignorance to sink into the lowest.* *They will elevate woman to be a companion and help-meet for man.* The eye of the rulers will be over all, embracing all with a common love, *uniting all as one family*, excluding all hatred and dissension, assigning to every one his own peculiar work, and making the good of the whole body to be the good of every member. This new state will not prohibit the inferior class from agriculture, or from any occupation which may minister to the wants

of the body, without pampering its vices ; but it will dread wealth as the seed of all evil. *It will encourage art, especially music, but make all art an imitation, not of mere fancies of man, but of the true, the beautiful, of the same IDEAS (ειδέαι,) which are the foundation of the whole polity ; so that buildings, and paintings, and sculpture, and music, and poetry, and oratory, and literature, every thing may be formed upon their model, —in one word, may be impregnated with the doctrines and affections of true religion.* It will provide for the young from the first dawn of their reason, tales and hymns which shall teach them, under the charm of music and verse and fancy, the doctrines of a sound theology. *It will put a poetry in the hands of the elders—the hierarchy—which shall elevate them to all noble thoughts and deeds, by placing in their mouths the words and sentiments of the noblest of their ancestors.* It will secure for the more gifted of the community an education which shall raise their reason, not only to embrace a faith implicitly, but to understand, arrange, and trace the bearings of the doctrines which they are to maintain and inculcate : *but the great problem placed constantly before them shall be “to recognise unity in plurality, and plurality in unity,” to lift up their minds from earth to heaven, and to allow of no real good but Him, who is the author of all good, the sun of the moral world, from whom they derive their light, and through whom they are able to diffuse it.* It will mitigate the horrors of war. *It will glory in those who died for this new state, or in discharge of duty, as in beings of an inspired order, τοῦ χοροῦ γένος, reverencing them as more than human, assembling at their tombs, believing that they are still watching over their country, and canonizing them with such honours as the word of God may allow.* It will*

* In this, as in the other passages generally, I adopt the *ipsissima verba* of the learned Professor Sewell, as little to be suspected of mistaking Plato's meaning, as of wresting it to favour a Roman Catholic sense. See "An Introduction to the Dialogues of Plato," p. 301. London : Rivington, 1841.

possess every virtue, not as if each member were perfect in all virtues—for the very constitution and unity of a body implies the imperfection of its parts—but each will be perfect in its own work and province, *and share in all the goodness of the whole, having a wisdom and courage, and temperance, and righteousness not its own, by its union with that body, in which they each reside.* *It will grow up, as it were, into a perfect man;* and what the body is, such will be the individual members of it; practising virtue not from blind instinct, not from expediency, but in obedience to positive laws, enforced by man, as the representative of the will of God; loving goodness for its own sake, for its own intrinsic conformity to the eternal principle of conscience, which assigns dominion to goodness, and subjection to vice; not merely looking to another world, though in another world the reward is sure and exceeding great, but happy even in this world, though “scourged and tortured in prison, the eyes burnt out, the body torn to shreds, happy in the rectitude of its own heart, and a blessing to that nation in which it shall be made to dwell.”*

But still true to the political and utilitarian bias, so characteristic of the Roman mind, it was the complete solution, afforded by Christianity, of the great problem they had been discussing, that chiefly struck the guests of Pudens. If, indeed, this new system were really the work of a divine author, and had for sanctions, not intimations, such as Numa pretended to have received from the fountain nymph Egeria, or as the Augurs, Haruspices, and Quindecimviri discovered in the Sibylline books, in the entrails of cattle, or the evolutions of the winged tribe, but the “ipse dixit,”

* In the ΕΠΙΝΟΜΙΣ, or peroration to his twelve books on Laws, (near the beginning,) Plato says:—“I think it is impossible for more than a very few to attain happiness or beatitude in the present life; but there is a good and great hope that each will perfectly obtain in a future world, the recompense of virtuous exertions and aspirations in this; nor in this do I adduce anything new or unheard of, but that which is notorious among all the barbarians, and which is beginning to be recognised by some of the Greeks.”

and authoritative injunctions of the Supreme Lord and Arbitrator of all ; *then* was there found at last, a means of retrieving the tottering fortunes of Rome, and of re-establishing its universal empire upon a truly eternal basis. In the programme of the fisherman, they discerned all that consummate statesmanship and the experience of centuries had suggested to their ancestors ;—a solemn worship, based upon august and sacrificial rites, calculated to impress the public with awe and veneration for the Divine Majesty ;—impressive sanctions, arising from the vivid hopes and fears of future retribution ;—expiations for sin ;—benisons and sanctifying ceremonies ;—a cycle of festivals to body forth, and, as it were, dramatize the “memorabilia” of the new state ;—to fill the memory with great examples, and to fire the living to emulation of the illustrious departed. Above all, they were not a little flattered in remarking such a singular coincidence between the hierarchical constitution of the Messiah’s empire and their own ;—various orders and gradations of ministry under the jurisdiction of one Supreme Pontiff, endowed with sovereign authority, to bind and loose, to regulate, define, enforce, and ordain anew, tallying in so many various instances with what had been devised by the political wisdom of their great ancestors. But all this referred merely to the skeleton ; how determine whether this new religion had any pretensions to truth, to a vivifying, interior spirit, to an authority really from Heaven, to a power to sanctify and liberate from sin, better than their own old system ? The great defect of the religion devised by their forefathers was, that it was an imposture—a grand, admirable scheme, but founded on falsehood. How did they know, how *could* they be *certain*, that this system of the fisherman was based on truth ? Was a *Jew* less likely to be an impostor than Pompilius ? *Where were his vouchers for the divinity of the Nazarene ?—where his own credentials that he had been sent ?*

CHAPTER XII.

“ And such also is the instinct of the bees ; for they settle not only on the sweet, but on the bitter flowers, and the sweetness they extract, and the bitterness they eschew ; and from qualities most contrary, bitter and sour, and rough and sharp, they prepare sweetest honey for man. And these we also imitate. And from those fields of your philosophy, so full of bitterness, we provide the sweet honey for your salvation.”—*Theodoret. Græc. Affec. Curat.* l. i.

“ *Philosophi, qui vocantur, si qua forte vera, et fidei nostræ accomoda dixerunt, non solum formidanda non sunt sed ab eis etiam tanquam ab injustis possessoribus in usum nostrum vindicanda.*”—*St. August. de Doctrina Christi.* l. ii. 40.

It was not the hope which emanates from trust in man, it was not the scepticism of affection,—incredulous to the silence and the decay by which death proclaims his jurisdiction and sets his seal upon the cherished object,—that was generated in the soul of Pudens, and at length found utterance upon his lips as he interrupted the apostle with a profession of faith in Christ’s divinity, and in his own power, as vicegerent of the Redeemer who had taken pity on the widowed mother of Naïm, to restore his son to his embrace.

Adorned by many virtues, Servilius Pudens was peculiarly distinguished for his hospitalities. His domestics and the retainers of his palace, had it in command to welcome the stranger, and to dispense his bounty freely to those who came for sustenance to his gates ; but it was himself who had discharged these kindly offices for St. Peter. His feelings, attuned to more exquisite sensibility than usual by domestic sorrow, had been powerfully affected at beholding the marks of violence and indignity still fresh upon the meek form of the apostle as he presented himself at his gates ; and how it was he could not imagine, but a glow of ineffable comfort seemed to play around his heart, when the venerable pilgrim pronounced the benediction of

peace upon his house. He took him by the hand with a cordiality which told his welcome, had him treated with the tenderest solicitude, and placed him amongst his own chosen guests, where the apostle, unnoticed and in silence, had listened to the conference of the patricians, noting the vicissitudes of hope and despondency as they passed across their souls, like alternations of sunshine and gloom.

When Caius Cassius bore down like a black tempest, it was Pudens alone who strove to make head against him, maintaining that, if the reasons urged against hope were powerful, there were also strong arguments against despair; and sternly refusing to acquiesce in atheism, or to believe that a universe, so full of order as to fill us with admiration to whatever side we turn, is undirected by a Providence.

“Who,” he cried, “can suggest a single improvement in the great fabric of creation? No mortal shall ever be able to suggest a single one, and should any one madly make the attempt, he shall not mend but make things worse, and prove that his own notions were incongruous, for,—‘Whatever is is best.’*

“Now, if all parts of the universe be so constituted and governed as that it would not be possible to conceive how they could be better adapted both for utility and effect, how can the conclusion be resisted, that there exists a supremely wise all-provident Intelligence? Art effects nothing without the direction of mind; how then shall nature do without it? Bring a machine so constructed as to represent the heavenly bodies with all their various and complicated motions; do as Posidonius, the mutual friend of Cicero and Cæsar, did, when the latter first invaded Britain, exhibit an orrery to a savage people, and will they be of opinion, think you, that the wondrous art which has mimicked the revolutions of the celestial spheres was constructed without the aid of reason? And shall an ingenuity divine be attributed to Archimedes, on

* “Ex eis enim naturis quæ erant, quod effici potuit optimum effectum est.”—*Cic. de Nat. Deor.* l. ii. 87.

account of a puerile attempt at imitation, while it is denied that a Deity was required to form the vast original ?

“ Thus no matter to what side we turn—no matter in what order of things we institute research—every where we are met by evidences, that all things are admirably administered by divine wisdom, with a view to the general advantage, and for the conservation of all.

“ Again,” he continued, “ we naturally inquire for whom this stupendous universe was fabricated ? Was it for the plants, or for the trees, or for the brute creation ?—Then, for whom ? Evidently for that being, who, by the power of reason, can convert all these things to his own use and pleasure. But the complete dominion of the earth and of all its resources resides obviously in man, and in man alone. The plains are ours, ours are the mountains ; we enjoy the rivers and the lakes ; the harvests yield their abundance for us, the trees their mellow fruits ; we, by irrigating streams, impart fecundity to the sterile lands, repulse the invading flood, direct the river, turn aside the torrent ; and, with plastic art, essay, and not in vain, from the rude and old, to form a new and more elaborate nature. As, therefore, we may presume that Athens was built for the Athenians, and Lacedemon for the Spartans, and as all things in these cities are properly said to belong to these respective nations, why not conclude that man is the chartered citizen of the universe ? Stupendous creature ! endowed with foresight, sagacity, with such multifarious faculties, of such amazing subtlety, with recollection so imperishable, with plenitude of intelligence and of wisdom, what a wondrous being is that living thing denominated **MAN** !* Evidently he is not of the ‘ *adstricti glebæ*’—a mere tiller of the clod, a predial serf. He looks rather like a spectator standing upon the world, erect, sublime, directing his gaze towards heaven, and capable of com-

* This is Cicero’s definition ; I think it is in the second book “ *De Legib.*”

prehending the power of God and the glory of his works. The stupendous exhibition of the universe—a spectacle which has no interest for any other creature—was manifestly prepared for him. His must be therefore some transcendent destiny. Of all living beings, so varied in nature and in kind, he alone participates in the reason and intelligence of the Divinity. Reason, therefore, the most excellent of all attributes, being common to man and to the gods, between them there must be society. Now, right reason being a law, it follows that a community of law exists between gods and men. Again, those who are associated in laws have reciprocal and common rights—relations from which what is called fellow-citizenship results. It may be said, that it is furthermore required that they be subjects of the same jurisdiction and authority ; and are they not ? To that incomprehensible Majesty that fills the heavens, to that divine Intelligence, to that supreme God, are they not all equally subject ? *So that this wonderful universe is to be considered as the common country of gods and men ;* and as, in earthly states, the relationship of families regulates the distinctions of the various orders and their privileges, so in this magnificent commonwealth, a similar bond and standard is not wanting ; for man is united to the gods, as it were, by consanguinity and a common birth.

“ Hence, of all the various species of living creatures upon earth, man alone recognises the Divinity ; and, amongst mankind, there is no tribe so untamed, so savage, as not to be impressed with the conviction, gross and incongruous if you will, but still with the instinct, that there is a God, a dogma which the soul derives from the *recollection* of the origin from which it sprung. Again, virtue in man and God is identical ; for virtue is nothing else than nature uncontaminated, unimpaired, and brought to consummate perfection, (‘ *Est igitur homini cum Deo similitudo.*’)—*Therefore, man is like unto God.* And this being the case, what more proximate and authentic relationship can be

established between two beings ? On this account it is that Nature ministers with such lavish abundance to all our wants and pleasures. Hence it is, that, while the Creator has abandoned other animals, as abject and solely intent to pasture on the vile sod they trample, to man he has given a front sublime, and inspired him to look to heaven as to the domicile of his extraction.

“ If man exhibited nothing beyond the phenomena of mere vitality, or instinct, we might suppose him to be subject to the same law with the plant that lives, and with the brute that feels ; but besides these, *he* is gifted with powers the most diversified and astonishing ; and first of all with memory, infinite in its capacity, which Plato calls the *recollection of that primæval state of being, from which the soul is supposed for some trespass or other, to have been degraded.*

“ Think you, was his nature a mere concretion of brute matter, who invented a nomenclature for the various objects in creation ?—a thing which Pythagoras always regarded as one of the greatest exploits of wisdom ; or his who tamed and civilized the prowling savage ? or his, in fine, who by a few little letters defined all varieties of articulate sounds, apparently so infinite ?

“ Plato, in Timeus, shows that to construct the world required a god, how then could Archimedes have imitated this system of revolving orbs, unless inspired by a principle divine ? Poesy too, methinks, requires a celestial inspiration, or heavenly instinct ; and philosophy, the parent of all arts, what else is it but what Plato calls it, the gift of the gods, or rather as Marcus Tullius terms it, their invention ?

“ I envy not the deities of Ida their draughts of nectar, ministered by Ganymede. These are poetic fictions, propensities of mortals bestowed by Homer upon the immortal gods ; but to feel instinct with divine intelligence, to see with the mind’s vision, to descry new creations dawning at the fiat of imagination ; by memory to be as if from all eternity, *these* are

attributes unquestionably celestial, and such as constitute the soul (according to the bold expression of Euripides) *a god.**

“It is now esteemed no trifling exploit to have seen the sluices of Pontus, and to have visited even the straits of Hercules,

‘Europam Libyamque rapax ubi dividit unda.’

What a spectacle, then, will it be to behold the whole world at once! to mark its situation, observe its form, measure its circumference, and to survey its boundless regions, cultivated and peopled with myriads, and also its vast solitudes, inhabited only by eternal winter or intolerable heat!

“When, therefore, our hour to depart from this life shall come—a thing which seems decreed for all—joyfully, and with thanksgiving, let us obey, convinced that we are liberated from a prison and that our bonds and fetters are struck off;—that thus emancipated we may either return to that eternal country, which so many evidences demonstrate to be our native home, or to that annihilation, in which our afflictions with our consciousness may find an end! And even though this latter alternative should be our destiny, still let us magnanimously hail as auspicious that day, which to others comes gloomed with boding, satisfied that nothing is really evil which the immortal gods have decreed, and which is approved of by nature, our tender mother. For it is not from blind chance that we are sprung, nor was it by fortuitous accident we were created; there is nothing true, or the human race is verily and indeed (‘profecto’) the master-work of an agency (‘vis’) omnipotent and all-wise; nor did such a being generate man, and foster him tenderly, and bring him up with solicitude to a noble degree of perfection, that, when he had gloriously achieved his mighty labours, he might sink into the eternal misery of death.† Nay, let us rather believe that he has pro-

* “Ergo animus ut ego dico, *divinus est*, ut Euripides audet dicere—Deus.”—*Cic. Tusc. Quæst.* l. i. 24, 63.

† “Incideret in mortis malum sempiternum.”

vided for us a port and an asylum of rest. Thither, may it be our lot calmly to glide without sail or oar along the smooth majestic current of existence. But even should adversity drive us out to be buffeted by tempests upon the faithless deep, it is but to retard us after a little trial, for, sooner or later, thither we all shall come."

These arguments, taken almost word for word from Cicero, (by whom they had been borrowed from the Greeks, and from Plato in particular, who in his turn derived them from intercourse with the Pythagoreans of Magna Græcia, and directly from the priests of Egypt, during his sojourn in that realm of "old tradition,") had long been familiar to every one who listened to the venerable senator; yet, never before had they such power to move them to conviction; for, with such impassioned energy did this afflicted father wield every topic, caught up at random, to ward off from his child a stroke of destiny more dreaded than that which had laid him lifeless at his feet, that the patricians no longer regarded this question as a mere scholastic *thesis* suited for the display of sophistry and eloquence, but as the death-struggle of a fond parent to rescue his cherished offspring from ghastly ruin, not as to the mortal but as to the immortal part. It was a spectacle sublime as it was heart-rending, to see him, with form august yet broken with adversity as that of Priam, pleading and as if supplicating, not for his child's dead body, but for his immortality. Infected by his enthusiasm as he spoke, their souls, so sceptical before, began to catch glimpses of the Elysium which he depicted; but too soon, alas! the brilliant mirage melted from a desert strewed with grim realities, with the trophies of the "universal conqueror," sepulchres and fragments of epitaph and urn—skeletons and scattered bones, and, in the foreground, yawning graves, and corses putrefying in every stage of dissolution! The arguments of the Epicurean overwhelmed him. In despite of every art and power of persuasion, despair sat down like a night-mare upon each breast. Death

they knew to be a *fact*. For the *termination of life*, under one form of being, they had a *certainty tangible and overpowering*, a conviction from which there was no escape ; whereas, for the *assumption that life was to be perpetuated, resumed, under other and more enviable auspices in futurity*, they had nothing but *gratuitous conjectures, instinctive longings, traditions, immemorial and universal*, but still surcharged by obvious fables, or but mere theoretical congruities. But guarantees of materials far more sterling than these were needed to hold hope upon her anchorage ; under the slightest trials these gave way like gossamer. Of knowledge, “*scientia*,” they had abundance ; what they wanted was *authority*. To calm its fears, and give it a hold upon *immortality, tangible as that with which itself was clutched by death, the soul required to hear, to see, and by every sense to test the resurrection of one whom it had beheld departing, through agony and death, to that same realm of mystery from which “no one had yet returned.”*

Scarcely had he ceased to speak when this insidious dread glided into the bosom even of the wretched father, and coiled itself round his throbbing heart. The feeling was insufferable. Hope struggled against the tightening folds of its destroyer, but in vain. The delirium of despair was ready to seize his brain, when the apostle rose up, and his words descended upon the spirit of the afflicted father, like the accents of the angel upon Hagar in the wilderness.

CHAPTER XIII.

“Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro
Languescit moriens ; lassove papavera collo
Demisere caput, pluvia cum forte gravantur.”

Aeneid. l. ix. 435.

“His snowy neck reclines upon his breast
Like a fair flower by the keen share oppress'd—
Like a white poppy sinking on the plain,
Whose heavy head is overcharged with rain.”

Dryden's Transl.

FOLLOWED by the guests, the afflicted Pudens led the apostle to where the nuptials of death were celebrated. The boisterous revel paused for a moment, as the patrician moved along the brilliant galleries and through the halls of the vast palace, spread with banqueting and crowded with feasting multitudes. But again it rushed on and resounded like a tempest, after the lull of an instant, or like a torrent which becomes more ungovernable by being checked.

Purchased sympathy, and lamentation without grief were at their orgies in the sanctuary of death itself. The senator waved his hand—the giddy dance stood still—the pantomime looked grave—the timbrel, the madrigal and the flute were hushed—and every eye escorted the broken-hearted father, as he led the apostle towards the dead body of his child.

The boy was habited as on a holiday, and reclined on a glittering couch, as if reposing after the toils of sport. A stole of flowers fell from his shoulders over his white and beauteous costume ; the lily and the rose were twined with the clustering ringlets of his hair ; but their bloom only served to deepen the shadows that overcast that countenance, so lately beaming with candid joy. Every lineament was now steeped in the noisome mildew of the grave. That

form which used to move in all the martial sports and exercises of Roman boyhood, with agility and grace that enchanted every beholder, was now motionless as a Parian statue. That eye, so full of Roman majesty and ambition, was shrouded in eternal night. The lips of his son, already livid and conglutinated with the slime of dissolution, were unable to utter even one syllable of comfort to the afflicted father, as he bent over the wreck of all his most cherished hopes.

Grace chastens and elevates without extirpating the affections. While at a distance, absorbed in lofty speculations, and under the excitement of the apostle's inspired words, the patrician had felt a glow of hope around his heart; but when he gazed upon the figure of his child, lapsing with awful rapidity to decay, he wrung his hands and shook his aged head in token of despair, as he turned his streaming eyes on the apostle.

By this time the noble spouse of Pudens, Claudia, not less celebrated for her beauty than her birth as the daughter of Caractacus, distracted with woe and followed by the chief kindred and friends of their illustrious lineage, arrived, with the lovely Pudentina and Praxedes, at the scene of grief.* The heart-broken mother could not endure the sight, and swooned in the arms of her attendants; while the fair children commenced a piteous wailing;—they called upon Timotheus to awake; they took him by the marble hand with fondness, and after again and again conjuring him by name, as if he still lived, they drew the apostle by the garments towards the bier, praying him to

* “It is not unlikely that Caractacus contracted a second marriage while in Rome with some lady about the court, whom the British historians called Gervissa, and exalt to the honour of being daughter to Cladius himself. *What seems certain is*, that Caractacus' daughter Claudia, who like her father changed her name in honour of the emperor, continued at Rome, and was married to the senator Pudens, where she was celebrated for her beauty and virtue by the poet Martial, and commended by St. Paul amongst the chief saints of the Roman church.” (This point to be further noticed hereafter.)—*Right Rev. Dr. Milner's Hist. of Winchester*, p. 31.

awake their brother, and St. Peter looking on them burst into tears.

The guests, who had now assembled from all quarters and beheld the distressing scene, began to murmur and cast looks of menace at the apostle, whose emotion passed for the trepidation of an unveiled impostor. The malediction was brewing upon many a tongue ; many an arm was already nerved to seize the hypocrite who dared to trifle with the sorrows of a noble family, when St. Peter serenely elevated his eyes and hands in prayer to Heaven.

Whoever in youth has been a pilgrim through the glowing south shall hardly be lonesome in old age. Memory shall have many a verdant spot whereon to retire during the pilgrimage over life's desert in after years—associates from whom neither despotism, nor age, nor death can separate it—reveries celestial and refreshing as the vision which came upon fugitive Israel as he slept. But amongst his reminiscences, none shall be more brilliant, or like the coming of the Deity to judgment, than that of sunrise among the Apennines ; where morning does not steal through the imperceptible degrees of twilight, but, after a moment's hesitation on the mountain-tops, bursts in full splendour over the entire landscape, which lives and laughs in the vivifying brightness, suddenly. And thus it was that life, balmy and resplendent, dawned “like the blushing morn” over the dead body of the youth. He breathed, he panted with exuberant sensation ; he bounded from the bier, like an angel from his rest ; and his voice, fragrant and musical as nature's matin song, broke out.

It was long before rapture and astonishment, distracted with ecstasy about the youth, could spare one thought to him who had restored him to animation. The parents embraced their child, and pressed him alternately to their bosoms, as if beside themselves with joy. They bathed his warm cheeks, by turns, with gushing tears and the most passionate caresses, then gazed upon him, as if incredulous with delight,

and again pressed him anew with redoubled emotion to their hearts. His sisters folded their Parian arms round him, and looking up, with tears which reflected the radiant affection of their brother's smile, upbraided him with their sorrow and made him promise not to die again.

The revellers who had lingered behind now rushed with tumultuous precipitation to the scene of wonder. The dance fell into anarchy—the lute dropped from the musician's hand, and the goblet from the lip of the voluptuary—the gamester abandoned the dice, the gourmand the banquet—the player who had hastened back to the audience, vociferous for his return, when he made his exit, stood aghast upon the stage, in the presence of the spectral solitude—and the drunkard, whom the din of mirth had lulled to sleep, was startled into consciousness by the abrupt silence that reigned in the banquet-hall.

Joy, wonder, bewilderment, ecstasy, assumed a thousand attitudes, and the murmur of those who beheld the miracle was varied as the sound of the harp when its chords are swept by the winds of heaven. Even callous scepticism was confounded to see how long the mirage lasted. The timid glided forward to see, and, when they beheld the delightful certainty, trembled, and with faint shrieks shrunk back as from an apparition. The aged lifted up their withered hands in impotent amaze; stern manhood seized his beard, and, setting himself firmly on the earth, peered steadfastly from under knitted brows, as if determined that neither credulity nor legerdemain should fool his intellect. The bacchanal, with the ivy tangled in his dishevelled hair and reeling from his cups, drew a hand across his unsteady vision—the whirl of intoxication stopt, undulated for an instant, and, looking upon him, living, who had been dead, he grew sober from astonishment.

BOOK II.

“ For when Fortune, winged and fond of wandering as she is, having passed in succession from the Assyrians, the Medes and Persians, and Macedonians, after tarrying with each for a little while, at length alighted on the banks of the Tiber, she descended from her slippery globe and entered this city, as if resolved to make it her abode for ever.”—*Plutarch.*

“ *Tempore quo primis auspiciis in mundanum fulgorem surgeret victura dum erunt homines Roma, ut augeretur sublimibus incrementis fædere pacis æternæ, Virtus convenit atque Fortuna,*” &c.—*Am. Marcel.* l. xiv. 6.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

“Where is the rock of triumph, the high place
Where Rome embraced her heroes? Where the steep
Tarpeian? Fittest goal of treason’s race—
The promontory whence treason’s leap
Cured all ambition.”

NEXT morning about the third hour, the patrician conducted St. Peter to the capitol.*

The foundations of this fortress, so renowned as the shrine and citadel of Roman power, were laid by Tarquinius Priscus in fulfilment of a vow made during the Sabine war—upon a scale of grandeur, however, more commensurate with the auguries he had formed of Rome’s future greatness, than with the resources of the infant state. The work was continued by Servius Tullius, at the expense of the Latin allies; and Tarquin the Proud devoted to the same purpose the rich spoils of Suessa Pometia, which he had taken by assault. But the glory of completing it was appropriately reserved for the era of liberty. After the expulsion of the kings, its dedication was celebrated in the second consulate of Horatius Pulvillus; and on so grand a scale had this undertaking been executed, that the opulence of after ages was exhausted in merely completing its embellishments.† It was

* So called because when the foundations of it were laid, a human head is said to have been found, (caput Oli vel Toli cuiusdam,) with the face entire,—“facie integra.”—*Livy*, l. 38, 55. *Dionys.* iv. 59. *Servius*, *Virg. AEn.* viii. 345.

† The very gilding of it is said to have cost 12,000 talents, *i.e.* £1,976,250.—*Plutarch*, *Popl.* The gates were of brass, and the tiles gilt.—*Virg. AEn.* viii. 348. *Pliny*, xxxiii. 3. *Hor. Od.* iii. 343.

destroyed by fire when L. Scipio and C. Norbano were consuls, four hundred and twenty-five years after its foundation, and immediately commenced again upon the original sub-structures. Sylla, when he assumed the dictatorship, charged himself to complete it; but this alone was wanting to his felicity, that he did not live to officiate at its dedication—an honour reserved for Lutatius Catulus, whose name was still emblazoned on a monument transcending the proudest erections of the Cæsars, when it was surveyed by the apostle on his way to the Tarpeian tower.*

This sanctuary of Roman religion, which had been preserved from profanation even when the Gauls had reduced all the rest of the city to ashes, became the common temple of the nations as they were subdued in succession. Thither had been carried, in the triumphal processions of successive conquerors, the deities of the whole world; so that the capitol came to be regarded as the chief seat of Jupiter and the immortal gods, rather than Ida or Olympus. Besides the shrines allotted to the captive deities, there stood the hut of Romulus thatched with straw, and the temple of Terminus, (who refused to give way even to Jove,) open at the top, "that he might see nothing above him but the stars."† But the great temple of Rome and of the world was that of Jupiter, with the temple of Minerva on the right, and that of Juno on the left. It was before its altar that the conquerors came to prostrate themselves in thanksgiving, for having slaughtered whole armies, and subdued nations, and rased great cities to the ground; and the golden roofs, the aisles, and colonades were hung and adorned with trophies that seemed infinite in number, and beyond all price.‡ It was here also the solemn auguries were made—the Sibylline books preserved and consulted—here sacrifices were immolated by the

* "Arx quod sit locus munitissimus urbis."—*Varro*. See *Tacit.* *Ann.* l. iii. 72.

† "Se supra ne quid nisi sidera cernat."—*Ovid. Fast.* ii. 671.

‡ *Virgil. AEn.* vii. 174, et seq.

senate and the Roman people, before any great enterprise was undertaken to arrest disaster, or to crown their rejoicings for success.

Innumerable were the objects of wonder that had accosted the strangers that morning at almost every step of their progress from the palace of the senator in the street of Patricians, across the fashionable quarter of the Suburra ; but all the rest seemed insignificant when they entered the Roman forum.* To Rome what Rome was to the world, all the glories of the illustrious living and of the illustrious dead seemed congregated there. Public buildings of the most superb description enclosed it upon three sides ; on the fourth, the temples of Saturn, (for the treasury,) of Fortune, and of Jove the Thunderer standing on the clivus, or declivity of the capitol, seemed to preside over the deliberations of the Roman people, and to hail the conqueror as he approached through a succession of triumphal arches along the “ *via sacra* ;” the temples, towers, brazen portals, and embattled walls of the capitol formed the back ground of the picture.

The mamertine, or state prison—the great public offices for the several departments of imperial administration—the basilicas, or courts of judicature—the halls of audience for embassies—the curiae† where the

* “ *Patricius vicus Romæ, dictus eo quod ibi Patricii habitaverunt, jubente Servio Tullio, ut si quid molirentur adversus, ex locis superioribus opprimerentur.*”—*Festus*. This street ran between the Viminal and *Æ*quiline hills.

† That the deliberations might be more solemn, the senate house in Rome could only be a temple, or consecrated place.—*Gell.* xiv. 7. Virgil, (*Æneid.* vii. 174,) identifies the great temple of Laurentum with the curia :—“ *hoc illis curia templum.*” In the lines following will be seen the manner in which such places were decorated :—

“ *Quin etiam veterum effigies ex ordine avorum
Antiquâ e cedro, Italusque, paterque Sabinus
Viti sator, curvam servans sub imagine falcem ;
Saturnusque senex, Janique bifrontis imago,
Vestibulo astabant ; aliique ab origine reges,
Martia qui ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi.
Multaque præterea sacris in postibus arma,
Captivi pendent currus, curvæque secures,
Et cristæ capitum,” &c. &c.* ”

senate met—the nymphæa dedicated to Venus—the temples of the heroes, conquerors, and tutelary deities of Rome were all disposed in order round about it ; and over its area were scattered, in august confusion, trophies of victories beyond number—the monuments of the patriotism, the valour, and pristine piety of many renowned generations.

Slightly elevated above the plain of the forum, like the dais or tribune of a temple, was to be seen the *comitium*, or place of meeting of the *populus*, or great council of the burghers, in the earliest times of the republic ; and at its extremity, facing the *curia*, or senate-house, stood the *rostrum*, now a stage or platform of marble, but in its origin a mere bank or mound of earth. It took its name from the trophy formed of the *rostra* or galley-beaks of the Carthaginian ships taken by Duilius, the first of the Romans who gained a victory by sea. Within the *comitium* was the black stone, which marked, according to one tradition, the grave of Faustulus, the foster-father of Romulus ; according to another, that of Romulus himself. There was the statue of Attius Navius, the famous augur ; and there, too, was the sacred fig-tree under whose shade the wolf had given suck to the two twins, Romulus and Remus—removed by the power of Attius Navius, (so said the story), from its original place under the *Palatine*, that it might stand in the midst of the meetings of the Roman people. Here were the Sibyls, one of the oldest works of Roman art. Here also were the small figures of the Roman ambassadors who had been slain at *Fidenæ* by the Veientian king, *Tolumnius* ; and here, too, at the edge of the *comitium*, where it joined the *forum*, were the statues which the Romans, at the command of the Delphian oracle, had erected in honour of the wisest and bravest of the Greeks—the statues of Pythagoras and Alcibiades.

In the open space of the *forum* itself might be seen an altar which marked the spot once occupied by the *Cursian* pool. Hard by grew the three sacred trees

of the eldest known civilization—the fig, the vine, and the olive. Further towards the capitol were the equestrian statues of C. Mænius and L. Camillus, the conqueror of the Latins.*

Beside the testimonials of recent victories in Parthia and Britain, stood the rude trophies which attested in obsolete characters, and in a dialect intelligible only to the archaïologist—the earliest successes in Sabinia and over Latin cities, long ago obliterated by suburban gardens—upon those few roods of space, there was to be found some emblem of dominion over every people from the Euphrates to the Western Ocean—from the cataracts of the Nile and the Lybian deserts to the icy fastnesses of the north.

From the portentous conferences between the publicans, or farmers of the taxes, and the great representatives of the monied interest, chiefly of the equestrian order, and from the concourse and bustle on the upper gallery of the colonnade which ran round the forum on three sides, it might be guessed what torrents of wealth were incessantly pouring in from the exhaustless provinces ;† yet, the aspect of despair and intense distress, in many instances characterising the profligate multitudes that thronged round the counters of the usurers (*argentarii*) underneath, too painfully evinced the fact, that destitution lurked among the golden palaces ; that the tribute of a subject world could not satisfy the appetites of that enormous city : and, that vice and dissipation could not escape from the pursuit of disgrace and misery, even amongst its glittering millions, its baths, its amphitheatres, and never ending festivals.

Advocates pleaded, and judges sat in the basilicas

* Arnold's Rome, vol. ii. ch. xxxvi. “Delle statue, che n'erano è incredibile la quantità, molte delle quali si leggono in Plinio e in altri scrittori ; onde ben poti stupirne Costantino, sicome scrive Ammiano, l. 16.”—*Nardini*, l. v. c. ii. p. 220.

† The colonnades, originally destined to afford a view of the gladiatorial fights and other holiday sports, which used to take place in the forum, were converted to the use above described, after amphitheatres were erected.

to dispense the laws ;* the stern lictors, some of them lolling about the statue of Marsyas,† were in attendance to execute the sentence. Among the groups scattered in all directions, might be seen the candidate conspicuous for his snowy robe, and the philosopher with formal beard and pompous air—each eloquent in self-commendation and equally earnest in their canvass—one for votes, the other for disciples. Some congregated to read the advertisements and proclamations, suspended on tablets or placards round the temples and public buildings, or to discuss the daily news ; others preferred to listen and applaud round the rostra, while crowds, eager for intelligence from the frontier camps and scenes of foreign conquest, awaited the arrival of the couriers pouring in in hot haste, continually, from quarters as different and climes as distant as those from which blow the free and fickle winds. Effeminate idlers, some carried by tall Armenian slaves in lecticas or palanquins, perused a book, or took notes as they lolled at ease ; others rode in chariots of bronze and ivory, which pursued spontaneously, rather than were drawn by any effort of antelope-like creatures, combining the docility of the stall with the wildness of the desert ; others, seeming to disdain the very earth they trod, lounged about, bedecked in the most brilliant silks painted and embroidered with flowers, birds, and beasts after the most grotesque fashions.

The “gens togata” lay basking in the sun round the porticos, bantering the passers by, or brawling about rival gladiators and charioteers ; while they awaited their rations from the public stores previous to their adjourning to the baths and theatres, but above all to that circus which, with them, absorbed every feeling which their ancestors were wont to consecrate to country and to home.

* For a description of these edifices, see Gell’s *Pompeiana*, vol. ii. p. 214.

† Near the Rostra stood the statue of Marsyas, set up as a warning to the litigious ; and in the same vicinity, slaves and thieves, or fraudulent debtors, used to be tortured and punished.

Foreigners of every garb and complexion were either gazing around in vacant admiration,* or absorbed in examining, sometimes with sighs and stealthy tears, the arches of triumph and the trophies, with reliefs and inscriptions, commemorative, it might be, of the battles and sieges in which their own liberties and nationality had been cloven down. Regret was mingled with the admiration even of the degenerate Greek, as he gazed upon the master-pieces of Phidias and Praxiteles, torn away from Corinth and Athens by the rude hand of conquest; and the Dacian and the Goth could ill suppress their curses and aspirations for vengeance, in recognising, on arch and pillar, the costume and lineaments of their own kindred, fettered in marble and dragged along in the triumph, or exposed on the arena to shed each other's blood for the amusement of the conquerors. Embassies from the remotest lands, and even mighty monarchs were humbly awaiting their turn for audience at the portals of the senate,† or anxious for the fate of their petitions to be admitted among the freedmen of Rome. Processions leading victims arrayed with flowers and preceded by bands of instrumental music, and singers,

* Vide C. Tacit. Ann. l. xiii. 54. Germans at the play in Rome!

† Ammianus, l. xvi., thus describes the city as surveyed by the Emperor Constantius:—" Proinde Romam ingressus, imperii virtutumque omnium larem, cum venisset ad rostra, perspectissimum priscæ potentiae forum, obstupuit; perque omne latus, quo se oculi contulissent, miraculorum densitate perstrictus, allocutus nobilitatem in curia, populumque pro tribunali, in palatium receptus favore multiplici, lætitia fruebatur optata. Deinde intra septem montium culmina, per acclyvitates, planiciemque posita urbis membra collutrans, et suburbana, quidquid erat primum, id eminere inter alia cuncta sperabat. Jovis Tarpeii delubra quantum terrenis divina præcellunt; lavacra in modum provinciarum extracta: Amphitheatri molem solidatam lapidis Tiburtini compage: Pantheon veluti regionem teretem, spaciosa celestidinis forniciatam, elatosque vertice scansilli suggestus consulum, et priorum principum imitamenta portantes, et urbis templum forumque Pacis, et Pompeii theatrum, et odeum, et stadium, aliaque inter hæc decora *urbis eternæ*."—

" Verum cum ad Trajani forum venisset, singularem sub cœlo structuram, ut opinamur, etiam minimum assensione mirabilem hærebat attonitus per giganteos contextus circumferens mentem, nec relatu effabiles, nec rursus mortalibus appetendos."

and incense, wound up the *clivus* among the temples, and flamens and haruspices standing at the altars took the auguries—inspecting the palpitating entrails of the victims—as they slew sheep and snow white steers of Clitumnus to the “immortal gods.”

There was not a frown upon the fair sky of Italy; not even a zephyr was abroad upon the air; and the towers and burnished domes of the “Eternal City” responded gloriously to the matin salutations of the sun, when the senator and the apostle looked out from the summit of the Tarpeian tower, beetling at an awful elevation above the Tiber.*

“O city of the new Jerusalem!” exclaimed St. Peter: “O capital of the King of kings, what must be *thy* glory, since so indescribably magnificent is the capital of this wretched earth!”

“Yes,” observed the senator, exulting in the surprise of the apostle, “great indeed have been the deeds performed, the changes effected, upon the wonderful scenes before you since they were first visited by our Trojan ancestor *Aeneas*. That hero is conducted by our great poet on a voyage of discovery from the Tiber’s mouth; and the river—now oppressed with the commerce of all countries—was startled by the novel apparition of two painted gallies upon its waves,—unaccustomed, at that time, to any image, save that of the wild hunter, or of the overhanging woods.

‘ Mirantur et undæ
Miratur nemus *insuetum* fulgentia longe
Scuta virum fluvio pietasque innare carinos.’†

* The traveller, on being led to a part of the Campidaglio, from which there is a fall of twenty or thirty feet into the back yard of an old house, looking towards the modern city, or *Campus Martius*, is naturally surprised to learn from the *Cicerone*, that *that* is the Tarpeian rock; but, if he would make his way on to a garden on a cliff over the Tiber, and, having built “a castle in the air,” get on the top of it, his notion would be very different of the Traitor’s Leap, and more in accord with history.

† “The woods and waters wonder at the gleam
Of shields and painted ships that stem the stream.”
Dryden’s *Transl.*

“I insist, in behalf of my Romans, on the right of taking the

“Upon a meadow, down yonder,” continued Pudens, pointing to the narrow level between the Aventine and the river side, “the shepherd-king Evander was feasting and celebrating games in honour of Hercules, when, to the great consternation of the little state, the gallies of the Trojan chief are descried, glittering with shield and helmet as they glided from under the sylvan shade; but the son of Anchises was speedily recognised as a friend and ally, and welcomed with regal hospitality. During the remainder of the feast, the venerable monarch rehearsed the occurrences which had brought him acquainted with the sire of *Æneas* in his early manhood; he dwelt with delight upon each trifling incident, and displayed the cherished tokens of their mutual friendship.*

“But, as he returned to his regal hut upon the Palatine where you now behold the palace of Cæsar towering to the very skies, the king described the surrounding scenery to his guest, and, with the amiable garrulity of old age, narrated many of the wild traditions of the place. This eminence where we stand, now crowned with time-worn towers, and with domes and roofs so justly termed ‘aurea’ by the poet, was at that period overgrown with thickets; wolves littered in the caverns of its craggy sides, and a forest of superstitious gloom, extending from this tower to the temple at the other extremity, added new horrors to the legends which lone herdsmen and shepherds used to tell about its haunted heights.

‘Some god they knew—what god, they could not tell—
Did there amidst the sacred horror dwell:
Th’ Arcadians thought him Jove; and said they saw
The mighty thund’rer with majestic awe,
Who shook his shield, and dealt his bolts around,
And scatter’d tempests on the teeming ground.’

“Look down,” pursued the senator, “upon that scene below, crowded as it now is with the trophies

poetical features wherever they are to be found, when they have dropt out of the common narrative.”—*Niebuhr*, vol. i. note 561.

* Virgil. *Æn.* vii.

of seven hundred years, exhibiting testimonials of conquest commensurate with the world,—the centre of civilization,—the great heart which imparts activity and life to the administrative functions of boundless empire,—the Roman forum was a pasture field, where the kine ruminated and the heifer with her lowing aroused the echoes of the surrounding woods and marshes, when Evander crossed it with his Trojan guest.*

“ The features of the scenery were unchanged when Romulus laid the foundations of this ‘Eternal City.’† they were cemented with the blood of his twin brother Remus, whom he slew for having bounded in derision over the mound of earth with which he had fortified, or rather fenced in, the summit of yonder Palatine.

“ To collect a population—for Rome was as yet a city but in name—he opened an asylum upon the plain between the base of this citadel and the temple of Jove, yonder. Presently, the umbrageous forest which grew where now extends that field of marble, became the rallying point for the malcontent, the outlaw, and for fugitives of every kind from the surrounding states ; and in this motley aggregation, from every sept of Latium and Etruria, descendants of the Phrygians who came with *Æneas*, Arcadians, followers of Evander, with other Hellenic or Pelasgian adventurers, behold the progenitors of what has been called ‘a populace of kings.’

“ Our first essay in war was with the Sabines, whose virgin daughters our sires had seized by violence ; but,

* “ *Passimque armenta videbant*

Romanoque Foro et lautis mugire carinis.”

“ *They view'd the ground of Rome's litigious hall,*

(Once oxen low'd, where now the lawyers bawl.)”

If called into court, it is to be apprehended Dryden would hardly escape being sent to Newgate for his parenthesis. He libels the poet laureate as well as the learned profession.

† “ *Remus prima victima fuit ; munitionemque urbis novæ, sanguine suo consecravit.*”—*Florus*, l. i. 1.

“ The festival called *Lemuria*, (Ovid. *Fasti*, v. 461—480,) was instituted by the remorse of Romulus, to appease the shade of Remus ; he also placed a vacant throne, with the insignia of royalty, for his murdered brother.”—*Serv. in En.*

through the intervention of these females, hostilities ended in the union of the two people ; and, having organized his infant kingdom—thus augmented—the author of the Roman name and dominion was said to have been assumed, under the title of Quirinus, among the gods.*

“ He was succeeded by Pompilius. The exercise of the sedentary and illiberal arts had been interdicted by Romulus to all except aliens and slaves ; assigning to the Romans agricultural occupations exclusively, and the art of war as the only one worthy of free citizens ;† but Numa, on the other hand, devoted all his energies to the introduction of religion, sacrifices, ceremonies, of every thing, in short, appertaining to the worship of the gods. He established the pontiffs, augurs, the salii, and other orders of priesthood. By him the year was divided into twelve months, the auspicious were distinguished from the ill-omened days, and the ancilia, or sacred bucklers, and the palladium, devised as so many talismans of empire. He likewise instituted the two-faced Janus—pledge of peace and war ; and the fire of Vesta, which, like the stars of heaven, was supposed to keep eternal vigil over the destinies of Rome, and to be tended by consecrated virgins. To render these institutions more sacred in the eyes of his rude subjects, he pretended that they had been revealed to him by Egeria, the goddess of a neighbouring fountain. No art was spared by him and by the sages who succeeded him, to impress the popular mind with religious awe, with a profound veneration for oaths, omens, and responses ; with the conviction

* “ Julius Proculus fidem fecit, visum à se Romu'um affirmans, augustiore forma, quam fuisse; mandare præterea, ut se pro nomine acciperent; Quirinum in cœlo vocari; placitum diis, ut gentium Roma potiretur.”—*Flori, Rer. Rom. l. i. 1.*

This imposture is of more importance in the history of Rome than the conquest of Asia or Britain. It gives a complexion to the annals of twelve centuries. The last representative of the prostrate and expiring empire, of which the embryo is now before us, assumed the name of Romulus Augustulus.

† Dion. Halicar.

that religion was paramount to every other influence and interest ; that nothing, no matter how exalted, was exempt from its jurisdiction ; and that nothing, either in peace or war, in private or public transactions, could be entered on, or ratified, legitimately, but under its auspices. Every page of Roman history affords a proof of the complete success of this system. Those who have studied the causes of Roman greatness most profoundly, and are admitted to have best comprehended the subject, are unanimous in assigning the first place to the strong religious reverence and enthusiasm by which the people were thus combined in one sacred league of patriotism, which nothing could disorganize, vanquish, or resist ; and by which the Patriarchs, who ever kept this engine in their own hands, were able to wield and direct the resistless force of the democracy. So that Numa, rather than Romulus, deserves to be regarded as the true founder of Roman greatness.*

“ Tullus Hostilius effected for military discipline as much as his predecessor Pompilius had done for polity and religion. Ancus Marcius, nephew and successor of Tullus, girded the city with ramparts, banked out the Tiber, which, till then, used frequently to wander from its bed among the valleys, particularly of the Vellabrum and of the great circus ; and, as if he foresaw that Rome was one day to be the emporium of the nations, he founded a colony at Ostia.†

“ Tarquinius Priscus, of Corinthian extraction, combined the erudition and arts of Etruria with Grecian genius. He introduced the fasces, the trabea, rings,

* “ Talche se si haresse a disputare, a quale principe Roma fusse obligato a Romulo o a Numa, credo piuttosto Numa atterebbe il primo grado—— Considerato adunque tutto, conchiudo, che la religione introdotta da Numa, fu tra la prime cagione della felicità di quella città.”—*Machiavelli, Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tit. Liv. &c.*

† “ Præsagens animo futurum, ut totius mundi opes, et commeatus, illo veluti maritimo urbis hospitio reciperentur.”—*Flori, Rer. Rom. l. i. 4.*

This testimony of Florus, as to the immense imports of Rome, will help to throw light upon the true cause of its decline and fall.

curule chairs, caparisons for steeds, the various species of toga—the striped or bordered, and the embroidered ; the custom of harnessing four white horses to the car of triumph ; and, in fine, the various badges and insignia which are the becoming ornaments, if not the essential appendages of jurisdiction.

“ Servius Tullius governed the state with more equity and wisdom than many who have succeeded to a crown with better title, and is said to have meditated the design of abdicating, in order to substitute a republican form instead of monarchy. The first census of the people was made by his order, and he registered and regulated the entire commonwealth with as much exactness as if it were a private family.* But, much as Rome was indebted to him and his predecessors for their virtues, it was far more beholden to the vices of Tarquin the Proud ; because, by them, the Roman people were as if exasperated into a rage for liberty.†

“ ‘ Incredibile,’ says Sallust, ‘ were the strides made by the country when it had gained its freedom. Then, for the first time, the Roman youth began to acquire, on the field of battle and in camps, that discipline and skill in the use of arms, which hitherto they used to learn on the Campus Martius. They rushed with equal alacrity to the laborious duties of the pioneer, and to the perils of the foremost ranks ; and a vehement love for brilliant armour and caparisons seemed to have absorbed the other passions which usually predominate at their age. To men inspired with such

* “ *Ab hoc populus Rom. relatus in censum, digestus in classes, curiis atque collegiis distributus ; summâque regis solertia ita est ordinata respublica, ut omnia patrimonii, dignitatis, ætatis, artium, officiorumque discrimina in tabulas referrentur, ac si maxima civitas minimæ domus diligentia contineretur.*—*Ubi sup.* The importance attributed by Florus to the census made by Servius, as one of the moving powers by which the people effected their emancipation, is not overrated.—“ *Actus a Servio census quid effecit, nisi ut ipsa se nosceret respublica ?*”

† “ *Postremo superbi illius importuna dominatio, nonnihil, immo vel plurimum profecit. Sic enim effectum est ut agitatus injuriis populus, cupiditate liberatis incenderetur.*”—*Florus, ubi sup.*

heroism toil was but a pastime, forced marches over the most rugged ground a recreation ; they stormed heights seemingly inaccessible ; they never heeded the number of their foes ; nothing could resist their valour. But of all their struggles, the fiercest was that in which they contended for glory with one another. Each burned to be the first to charge the enemy, to scale the rampart ; and the glory of achievements such as these, they prized beyond all riches and nobility.'

"Eternally harassed by the enemies who surrounded them and who frequently carried war, simultaneously, from opposite directions up to their very gates, how innumerable the disasters, how tremendous the resistance, through which, during three centuries of incessant warfare, they fought their way from the 'pomoerium' to the undisputed command of the fair realms between the Alps and the straits of Sicily. At Cremera, the flower of the nobility—an army of young patricians—was annihilated ; and, to the present day, the gate through which they rode proudly forth to battle is designated the accursed.* Our overthrow by the Gauls, on the banks of the Allia, was a still more direful disgrace—the victors advanced to Rome and found her gates without one defender ; yet never did Roman virtue appear more sublime than in that extremity.

"With more than ordinary solemnity the conscript fathers assembled in the forum, and there, while the pontifex maximus officiated, devoted themselves to the deities who preside over the shades of death. Then each returning to his own house, and seating himself in his senatorial robes upon the curule throne, awaited in silent majesty the coming of the barbarians.†

* " *Scelerato signatur nomine, quæ proficienes in prælium porta dimisit.*" L. i. 12.—This gate must have served as a striking landmark to tradition. Often as the people passed through it to the elections, reviews, or festivals of the city, or as the burghers went out to their farms or to the wars, the story of Cremera was rehearsed by the old to the young, and by them to the next generation.

† Livy thus paints the scene :—"Adeo haud secus quām vene-

In the meantime, the priests and augurs either buried the idols and sacred furniture of the temples, or carrying them with them, fled. It is recorded of one Lucius Albinus a plebeian, so great was the piety of that age, that he caused his own wife and children to dismount from the vehicle on which he was hurrying them away, in order to take up the vestal virgins ; who, barefooted and unrespected in the panic and confusion of that rout, were endeavouring to make their escape with the sacred fire and regalia of the goddess. With the exception of the capitol, magnanimously defended by Manlius and a handful of the youth, scarcely a thousand men, the entire city was levelled to the earth.* But we have to thank the gods for a calamity which consumed the huts of our shepherd sires, and obliterated the poverty of our origin ; while, with such fury did the country rise up from her prostration, that she became more irresistible than ever ; and, led on by Manlius and Camillus, pursued her destroyers with such ruin, that one of them never re-crossed the Alps to boast of having burned Rome.†

“ But of all our antagonists the most desperate and formidable were the Samnites. The gold and silver that glittered on their shields and polished armour attested the opulence of this people ; truce and treaty violated no less than sixty times bore witness to their indomitable courage, which derived fresh obstinacy

rabundi intuebantur in ædium vestibulis sedentes viros, præter ornatum habitumque humano augustiorem, magistate etiam quām vultis gravitasque oris præ se ferebat, simillimos diis. Ad eos velut simulacra versi quum starent. M. Papirius unus ex his dicitur Gallo, barbam suam, ut tum omnibus promissa erat permulcenti, Scipione eburneo in caput incusso iram movisse ; atque ab eo initium cœdis ortum, ceteros in sedibus suis tucidatos.”—L. v. 41.

* “ Totam urbem igne, ferro, manibus, solo exæquant.”—*Florus*, l. i. 13.

† “ Agere gratias diis immortalibus, ipso tantæ cladis nomine, libet. Pastorum casas ignis ille, et flamma paupertatem Romuli abscondit.”—*Florus, ibid.*

“ Ne quis extarit in eâ gente, qui insensam à se Romanam urbem gloriantur.”—*Ibid.*

from defeat ; as expert at turning the defiles and fastnesses of their native mountains to account by stratagem, as they were prompt and headlong in pouring to the open onslaught ; they had sworn and devoted themselves with direful imprecations, before altars streaming with human gore, to be the destruction of this city. But, notwithstanding, so complete was their overthrow, after fifty years' war, carried on from sire to son with ever increasing fury, that there is not even a vestige of that nation to be found at present except the name.*

“ The Tarentine or Pyrrhic war succeeds, signalized by a series of victories which involved in one common ruin the powers of Campania, Apulia, Lucania and Tarentum—that is of all Italy, one may say, leagued with the most renowned and warlike monarch of Greece. But still more distinguished was it by the unexampled heroism, and incorruptible integrity, displayed by the Roman generals, and by Curius and Fabricius in particular. At the commencement of the war the haughty Tarentines pretended not to know ‘ who or from whence were the Romans,’ and

* A.U.C. 493, A.C. 291, Q. Fabius returned to Rome, having terminated the Samnite war, and triumphed.

“ While he was borne along in his chariot, according to custom, his old father rode behind him, as one of his lieutenants, delighting himself with the honours of his son. But at the moment when the consul and his father having arrived at the end of the sacred way, turned to the left to ascend the hill of the capitol, C. Pontius, the Samnite general, who, with the other prisoners of rank, had thus far followed the procession, was led aside to the right hand, to the prison beneath the Capitoline hill, and there was thrust down into the underground dungeon of the prison, and beheaded. One year had passed since his last battle, nearly thirty since he had spared the lives and liberty of two Roman armies, and unprovoked by the treachery of his enemies, had afterwards set at liberty the generals, who were given up into his power as a pretended expiation of their country's perfidy. Such a murder committed or sanctioned by such a man as Q. Fabius, is peculiarly a national crime, and proves but too clearly that in their dealings with foreigners the Romans had neither magnanimity nor justice.”—*Arnold's Rome*, vol. ii. 33.

“ Ut hodie Samnium in ipso Samnio requiratur!”—*Florus*.

insulted our ambassadors.* Yet was their champion Pyrrhus doomed to see himself driven twice, covered with wounds, from his own camp; and at last as a fugitive from the shores of Italy. The city of that day was too small to contain the spoils, and never, I am certain, did train more glorious ascend this 'hill of triumphs,' than that which, instead of droves of sheep and cattle of the Sabines and Volsci, as in the days of Romulus; instead of the wagons of the Gauls, or the shattered arms of the Samnites, led captive the chivalry of many warlike nations interspersed with the treasures and gala of voluptuous Tarrentum;—golden vases, candelabra, embroidered robes of purple, escutcheons, statuary, pictures, and various works of Grecian art and elegance. But what most of all filled the people with exultation was the sight of those monsters, the elephants—once so much dreaded, now crest-fallen as if sensible of their captivity, cowering under the scorn of their conquerors rather than under the enormous towers which they carried as they were led in the procession.†

" This period is usually considered the adolescence of the Roman people, in whose history we easily distinguish stages of development strikingly analogous to the infancy, boyhood, youth, and mature virility, which characterise the life of man. And verily ours was a truant youthhood, in which the ferocity of our shepherd sires, breaking out into revolution in camp and forum, stoned great generals to death, expelled such patriots as Coriolanus and Camillus from the country which they had saved; and for a while annihilated, I may say, the Roman name and nation, by withdrawing with their arms and household gods to the 'mons

* "Qui autem, aut unde, Romani, nec satis norant."—*Flor.* l. i. 18.

When Pyrrhus asked his ambassadors what they thought of Rome, they answered, That the city was like a temple, the senate like an assembly of kings:—"Urbem templum sibi visum, senatum regum esse."—*Flor. ibid.*

† "Sed nihil libentius populus Romanus aspexit, quam illas, quas timuerat cum turribus suis belluas; quæ non sine sensu captivitatis, summissis cervicibus victores equos sequebantur."—*Flor. ibid.*

sacer.' But even in their seditions, stirred up now by the love of liberty, again by respect for virgin integrity—at other times to obtain the indispensable guarantees of popular rights, and an equitable participation in the honours and advantages of the republic—we easily discern the prognostics of a genius, destined in its maturity to rule all nations. Thus do we behold the Romans, after five centuries of incessant and most desperate struggles under kings and consuls, fairly at the head of confederated Italy, nearly untried as yet in foreign warfare, but to the keen observer manifestly a match for the whole world in arms."*

Perceiving the interest with which the apostle listened to every thing connected with the destinies of their country, (especially the exploits of its *iron* valour,) the guests of the preceding night, (most of whom had joined the patrician as he crossed the forum,) now collected in a group round himself and St. Peter, where they were seated on the summit of the tower;—and took great pains to instruct the venerable stranger in the most striking details of that world of wonders before them, extending on every side as far as the eye could reach.

* "Domitâ subtractâque Italiâ, populus Romanus prope quingentesimum annum agens—par orbe terrarum esse cœpit."—*Flor.* l. ii. 1.

CHAPTER II.

“ Divided by a river, on whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With towers and temples proudly elevate
On seven small hills, with palaces adorn’d,
Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens, and groves.”—

Milton.

“ Terrarum dea gentiumque, Roma,
Cui par est nihil et nihil, secundum.”*

Martial.

At this period the city had attained to a degree of magnificence and vastness of extent almost incredible.

“ All the surrounding regions outside the walls,” says Dionysius of Halicarnassus, “ are so thickly inhabited that, if one were to attempt from some vantage ground to determine the limits of the city, he would try to no purpose; for suburbs that seem to know no limit are so closely identified and so much of a piece with the walled portion of it, that it presents a boundless prospect to the beholder on every side.”† “ It would seem,” says Aristides, “ that all nations have congregated in this one city for the sake of neighbourhood, and it accommodates them all; for as one earth sustains, one Rome has lodging for the human race.”‡ The sophist Pale-

* Goddess of the earth, and of the nations, Rome,
To whom nothing is equal, nothing second.

† “ Omnia loca circa civitatem habitata sine mænibus esse
(scribit Dionys.) in quâ si quis intuens magnitudinem Romæ
exquirere velit, frustra eum fore, et hæsurum ubi desinat urbs, ubi
incipiat: adeo suburbana ipsi urbi adhærent et innexa sunt, et
speciem immensæ longitudinis exhibent spectanti.”—*Apud Casal.
de Urbis ac Rom. Imp. Splend. &c.*

‡ “ Ut terræ solum fert omnes, sic omnes homines (Roma)
capit.”

mon, quoted by Galen, says:—" Well may it be called the 'city of cities,' since it seems to have collected all the others within itself." And again:—" it is not one day, nor as many days as are in the year that would suffice to enumerate all the cities that are brought together in Rome; for there, entire nations dwell crowded into distinct quarters—Cappadocians, Scythians, those of Pontus, and other nations in great number." Similar language is used by the Roman writers. " Consider," says Seneca, writing to his mother, *Helvidia*, " see this concourse, for which the roofs of a city that is boundless cannot afford a covering—the greater part of this multitude is without a country, having poured into this great ocean of life from the colonies, from the provincial towns, in short, from the whole world." (" *Ex toto denique orbe confluxerunt.*") " Expanding from the *pomerium*," says Pliny the elder, " the suburbs have added many cities to the one within the walls." By some, a circumference of fifty miles* is assigned, others assign one much greater to the city; nor are we entitled to reject this as exaggeration, until we calculate the distance from *Otriculum* fourteen miles up the Tiber, down to *Ostia*, another fourteen miles, and then compute the area included between that line and another taking in the hill country from *Tibur*, on by *Præneste* and *Tusculum*, to the *Mons Latiaris* rising above *Alba Longa*; and, from thence down to the sea at *Antium*, and so along shore back again to the Tiber's mouth; because there is the fullest proof, that the intermediate space was one continued city; to say nothing of the regions beyond the Tiber, on the *Etruscan* side, or of the prolongation of these suburbs which shot out along the highways, like rays from a common centre.†

* *Vopiscus* says fifty, Pliny the elder seventy miles.

† On the words of Pliny quoted before, " *expatiantia tecta multas addidisse urbes*," *Casalius* says, " *nempè ut tot essent urbes, ex quo ipsa suburbia, quæ Tibur, Otriculum, Ariciam atque alio excurrebant; et maximè Ostiam mare versus 15 millia.*" And of the shores about *Ostia*, Pliny the younger writes to *Gallus*, l. ii. Epist. :—" *Littus ornant varietate gravissima, nunc continua, nunc intermissa*

Starting from the gilded terminus in the forum these great roads traversed Italy in every direction ; and, "conducting through a country naturally enriched by all the varieties of nature, were further embellished with the most beautiful objects of art. Temples, ædicolæ, triumphal arches, sepulchres, villas, groves, gardens, were thrown together in the most picturesque irregularity ; porticoes afforded shade, and inns shelter, refreshment, or repose to the traveller ; who beheld, as he approached, the increasing capital thus stretched out in beautiful and endless suburbs ; for the Romans, in this prosperous age, were very far from entertaining a suspicion that it could ever become necessary to surround the seat of empire with walls."*

"Come we next," says Pliny, in the thirty-sixth book of his *Natural History*, fifteenth chapter, "to treat of the architectural wonders of our city, and from them alone make it evident that the whole world has been conquered by Rome, as will appear even so often as each miracle of art and splendour is viewed in its own turn ; but when all are aggregated and piled up together, to attempt their description is like attempting a representation of the universe."

It was the boast of Augustus, that "having found Rome of brick he left it of marble." He built the temple and forum of Mars the Avenger, having stately porticoes on three sides, adorned with statues of his regal ancestry, beginning with Eneas ; the temple of Jupiter Tonans on the brow of the capitol ; that of Apollo on the Palatine, with its libraries and halls for poetical recitation ; the theatre of Marcellus, the porticoes of Livia and Octavia—among the most splendid ornaments of the city, and sources of great

tecta villarum, quæ præstant multarum urbium faciem, sive ipso mari sive ipso littore utare." We are told by Ammianus Marcellinus, that the Persian ambassador, Hormisdas, having been asked by Constantius, when they had come only as far as Otriculum, "What he thought of Rome," made answer, that, "he was sure they must have already passed nearly half through the city," though not within fourteen miles of the gates.

* Gell's *Pompeiana*, vol. i. p. 72.

enjoyment, as affording opportunity for exercise and recreation, either on foot or in carriages, in every inclemency of the seasons. The senate often met in them during the intense heats of summer, and they were adorned with statuary, altars, paintings, and bazaars, in which the most splendid wares, jewellery, pictures, books, and all objects of virtù were exposed to sale. His ministers and courtiers followed the emperor's example. The Esquiline, formerly the most filthy and abandoned region, became the most elegant and fashionable through the taste and example of Mæcenas. Agrippa built the Pantheon ; but his chief object was to adorn Rome with fountains. All who courted favour, at a time when servility was in its first fervour, helped to realize the project of the prime minister—"so to deck out the queen of nations, as to inspire her subjects with admiration, her enemies with awe."

Cato the Censor spent upwards of £250,000 (Dionysius says 1000 talents) in the cleansing of the subterranean channels of the town, even of his day ; the principal cloacæ, or sewers, first constructed by Tarquinius Priscus, (and remaining perfect to the present time,) were so high and broad, that a wain loaded with hay might go below, and vessels sail in them.*

But the palm has been justly given to the aqueducts among the works of Roman grandeur. Some of them brought to Rome the treasures of the most cool and sequestered fountains, from a distance of sixty miles, through rocks and mountain chains, and over rapid rivers and valleys, on an interminable series, as it were, of triumphal arches rising in some places to more than a hundred feet high. "If any one," says Pliny, "will diligently estimate the abundance of water supplied to the public baths, fountains, fish-ponds, artificial lakes for galley-fights, to pleasure-gardens, and to almost every private house in Rome, and will then consider the difficulties that were to be

* According to Martianus, who measured them, the width of the greatest was sixteen feet.

surmounted, and the distance from which these streams are brought, he will confess that nothing so wonderful as these aqueducts is to be found in the whole world." Strabo says they supplied every house, and that their waste waters swept like torrents through the cloacas. Some writers say there were twenty; but the principal ones named are only fourteen in number. The Virgo, the Martia, and Alsiatina were for ponds, fountains, and artificial lakes; the Julia and Annio novus, the Crebra and Herculanus Rivus were the greatest, the Claudian excepted, which conveyed, from the heart of the Apennines, a torrent that looked like a mountain cataract, in falling from the highest point of the Aventine into a deep glen.* It is not surprising that Frontinus, who was curator, or grand overseer of aqueducts, and has left a learned report of his charge, prefers them to the "idle masses of the pyramids." He enumerates the various causes which rendered it so enormously expensive and difficult to keep them in repair; although they appeared, even in the times of Cassiodorus, of such solidity, that they would seem to have been constructed not by mortals but by nature itself. For so many delights and blessings were the Romans indebted to them,—slaking the thirst of summer, cooling and bracing the enervated frame, regaling the ear by their murmurs, the eye by their pellucid clearness and verdant or cerulean hues,—that, epicurean as he is, Pliny the elder, in reflecting on it, cannot suppress an outburst of acknowledgment to the immortal gods.

They supplied, in the first place, the fountains, of which Agrippa alone constructed seven hundred with lake-like basins, besides one hundred and five that

* "Vicit antecedentes aquarum ductus novissimum impendium operis, inchoati a C. Cæsare (Caligula) et perfecti a Claudio; quippe a quadragesimo lapide ad eam celsitatem, ut in omnes urbis montes levarentur, instruxere Curtius et Cærulæus fontes. Erogatum in id opus *H. S.* ter millies."—*Plin. Hist. Nat.*

"Claudiam per tantam fastigii molem sic ad Aventini caput esse perductam, ut cum ibi exalto lapsa ceciderit, cacumen illud excelsum, quasi imam vallem irregare videatur."—*Cassiodorus apud Casel.*

cast up jets of water in a variety of fashions. According to Dio, when the mob once became clamorous for wine, Augustus told them that “ Agrippa had taken care they should not want for drink.”

The thermæ or baths, located in every quarter of the city, were also replenished from the aqueducts. In these temples of health and enjoyment, the lofty apartments were encrusted with the most costly marbles, and embellished with statuary, (the Laocoön was found in one of them,) and mosaics that imitate the art of the pencil, in the elegance of design and variety of colours. Into the capacious basins, (where many at once could swim, disport, and enjoy the water,) and which were composed of porphyry overlaid with silver, and set, in many instances, with precious stones, there poured perpetual streams of the hot, tepid, or cool element, through so many wide mouths of bright and massive silver.* Thus the meanest citizen could every day luxuriate amid scenes of magnificence which no oriental monarch could command. Some of these baths had sixteen hundred bathing places—one had two thousand two hundred, like that described above ; and attached to each therma were porticoes, groves, and halls of

* “ *Lavacra in modum provinciarum uxstructa ; ac si non urbes modo, sed provincias æmularentur variis ædificiis.*”—*Ammian. Marcell.*—“ Erant lavacra publica ingentia, sicut Antonianæ Thermæ factæ in usum levantium.—Sellæ vel solia habebant mille sexcentas e pollito marmore factas : Diocletianæ autem bis tantum (?) nimirum, bis mille ducentos ut totidem homines simul inibi lavare potuerint. Solia autem hujusmodi ita magnifice extorta erant, ut in eis fas esset sedere, natare, stare ; quorum inventio a Dione tribuitur Mæcænati. In iis, præter earumdem Thermarum corpus, cellæ piscinæ capaces, et longæ porticus, xysti, nemora, Sphærristeria consistebant.

—“ *Feminæ laventur, et nisi argentea solia fastidiant, eademque materia et cibis, et probris serviat ; videret hæc Fabricius et stratas argento mulierum balneas.*”—*Pliny*, l. xxxiii. 12. Iterum,—“ *Sed in ornamentum politarum, et impensæ causa eo deliciarum venimus ut nisi gemmas calcare nolumus.*”—“ The baths of Antoninus Caracalla, which were open at stated hours for the indiscriminate service of the senators and the people, contained above sixteen hundred seats of marble ; and more than three thousand were reckoned in the baths of Diocletian.”—*Gibbon's Hist. of the Decl. and Fall, &c., ch. xxxi. vol. iv. p. 108.*

recreation, xysti or terraces for gymnastic exercises, libraries, and academies where philosophers held lectures or disputations.

The Campus Martius, which, from being a royal demesne, or farm of the Tarquins, extending from the foot of the capitol to the Tiber, had been converted under the republic into a place of martial exercise for the Roman youth, was adorned with most superb monuments, arches of triumph, hippodromes, fountains, temples, theatres, umbrageous walks, sylvan scenery, interspersed with shrines and statuary, and marble bowers ; but its greatest miracle of art was the stupendous mausoleum, or tomb of Augustus, where the ashes of so many of the Julian family were deposited in golden urns ; and where the deification, or apotheosis of the emperors usually took place.* Like the other distinguished parts of the city it was embellished with Egyptian obelisks ; but the largest of these was the one in the great circus, that glory of the Roman people, from the seats of which, (all of marble mostly covered with soft cushions,) four hundred thousand spectators could enjoy the chariot races and other circensian games. The city was populous with statues erected either by order of the senate, or by private vanity ; but, after all, the edifices dedicated to the immortal gods and heroes formed its characteristic feature ; for, not only did shrines and altars arise in every quarter, and at every turn, to their peculiar honour, but the curiæ of the senate, the basilica, the theatre, the forum, the nymphaeum, the circus, the amphitheatre—every dwelling, and monument, and place of rest, from the most sordid and infamous to the most illustrious—were so many sanctuaries of their worship. The streets themselves and the public forum

* Strabo says of the Campus Martius, &c. :—“ Quæ omnia si quis viderit, dicat, censeatque reliquam urbem non nisi additamentum campi hujus esse. At idem si in forum vetus deinde progressus alia aliis hærentia et consequentia videat, basilicas, porticus, templa, tum capitolium ipsum, et in eo templa, tum palatinum et Liviæ ambulacra ; is facile priorum obliviscatur, et omnium quæ viderat extra urbem.”—L. v. p. 337.

were set with altars, on which garlands, incense, and victims were so perpetually offered up, that the smell of victims saluted the passing stranger at every step, and caused the whole city to appear then, as it did to the envoys of king Pyrrhus, like one vast temple.* As to the palaces of the Roman nobility, it is enough to say that they were so many Romes in miniature, with theatres, baths, temples, hippodromes, libraries, athenaeums, basilicas, halls of audience, markets, lakes, fountains, aviaries, hanging gardens ;—and covering more ground than Cincinnatus, twice dictator, had in his farm :—enough to say of their wealth what Seneca said, that, “ in his time great rivers flowed *through* private estates, which had once formed the boundaries between hostile nations ;” and that the torrents of wealth, that poured into the palaces of Rome, enabled her senators to eclipse the splendour and luxurious indulgence of oriental monarchs. These treasures attracted around their possessors the dainties of air, earth, and ocean.†

“ The Mediterranean and the lesser seas,” continued Petus, “ would seem to have been disposed by the gods for the express purpose of facilitating the conveyance to our granaries and marts of the produce of the vast and teeming countries which extend around their shores, especially of Africa, Sicily, and Egypt ; for, whatever is most precious and exquisite—the delicacies of every season—the wonders of

* “ *Singula ornamenta circi—singula templa sunt—cæterum et plateæ, et forum, et balneæ, et stabula, et ipsæ domus nostræ, sine idolis omnino, non sunt. Totum sæculum Satanæ et angeli ejus repleverunt.*”—*Tertul. de Spectac.*

† “ *Quæque magnarum domuum omnia in se ipsa habet, quæcunque mediocris urbs possit continere ; nempe circum, fora, templa, fontes, balneæ.*” To this list of Olympiadorus ap. Photium, Vitruvius adds ;—“ *bibliothecas, pinothecas, basilicas, non dissimili, modo quam publicarum operum magnificentia comparat,*” &c.—L. vi. 8. “ *Nimis sic habitarunt, qui hoc imperium fecere, quorum agri quoque minorem modum obtinuere quam cellaria istorum.*”—*Val. Max. l. xxxvi. 15.*

“ *Quid loquar inclusas inter laquerae sylvas,
Vernula quâ vario carmine ludit avis?*”—*Rutilius.*

every art and climate—are destined, by consent of all, as tributes due to our unparalleled felicity. Ingenious strangers have observed, that it is no longer necessary to travel round the world to see whatever is most costly and curious in it; for that they may be all seen at once in the bazaars and marts of Rome. The Scythian hunter roams the forests of the north, that we may be wrapped in ermine; it is for us the savage tribes, along the Danube and the Baltic, dive for amber; the richest carpets and embroidery are destined for our saloons and banquet halls; the looms and the plastic hands of Asia, skilled in every luxurious craft, seem to labour but for Rome. The spices and the perfumes of Araby are exhausted by our delicacy; and whole argossies, which sail periodically from the Red Sea for the distant India, can hardly supply the demand for pearls, silks, and diamonds. It is well that you have, with your own eyes, beheld the furniture and decorations of our palaces, for how could I describe them? Lucullus used to feast five and twenty thousand guests at once; and even at that period, since which the city has increased immensely, Rome numbered twenty thousand rich as he. The sounds of mirth and revelry are never silent within our palaces; crowned by fortune with every gift which can satiate the desires, we hold it to be our fate and our duty to enjoy them.

“ But to save indulgence from being fatigued, the gods have provided places of refuge from monotony—retreats where the passions may get leisure to revive. On every sunny isle, and smiling shore, and promontory of the Roman world, are to be seen the beauteous villas of our nobility—each senator having such a number of them, and so located, as to enable him like migratory birds to enjoy the bloom and the temperature of an everlasting summer. It is a proverb with us, ‘ that wherever the Roman conquers, he inhabits.’ Allured by interest or pleasure, our ancestors never failed to hasten after the advantages of each succeeding victory. Colonies were planted in the most

convenient and fertile situations ; and thus were the politeness, the elegance, the dialect, and the fashions of the capital, disseminated over the conquered provinces. It is long since the spirit of improvement has not only crossed the Alps and the Pyrenees, but made itself manifest along the savage borders of the Rhine and the Tamigi. Education and study have insensibly inspired the most distant, and formerly most savage tribes, with the tastes and sentiments of Romans ; and enabled them to enjoy the literature of two languages, which by the intimate and protracted union of the east and west have become natural to mankind. Homer as well as Virgil is transcribed and admired by the descendants of the naked warriors who fought against Cæsar in Britain, and beyond the Rhine."

But the great delight of the patricians was to entertain St. Peter by instituting a variety of quaint comparisons and contrasts between imperial Rome as he then beheld it, and the Rome of the elder ages. This was a national propensity. They dwelt with pleasure on the insignificance of their country's origin, and preserved the memorials of it in all their primitive simplicity, and with religious care. The ruminal fig tree under which the twins were found was planted in the commitia ; the hut of Romulus was preserved in the capitol ; the wooden bridge by which Ancus Martius joined the Janiculum to the city was never suffered to be replaced ; and in the repairs which it required from age to age, it was prohibited to use either iron or copper, nothing but wood ; and the care of this relic was considered so sacred and important, that it was from their being intrusted with it, the chief college of priests derived the name of pontiffs.*

* " L'on peut remarquer en général, que les Romains trouvaient un grand plaisir à s'entretenir de la petitesse de leur origine. Ils conservaient dans toute leur simplicité primitive les monumens construits dans les premier siècles."—*Benjam. Const. du Polyth. Rom.* tom. i. p. 23.

"There was a time," said one, "when the little towns of Sora and Algidum were a terror to almighty Rome ; Satricum and Corniculum, too limited at present for a modern pleasure-ground, were provinces of importance in those days, when the conquerors of such villages as Veruli and Borillæ were decreed the honour of a triumph. The conquest of Corioli, at present a suburban villa, has given a name to history as august as those assigned to the great conquerors of Africa and the Germanic nations. Tibur and Preneste, where we now take refuge from the autumnal heats, were never approached by the Roman armies of old, until the gods had been propitiated with solemn sacrifices and auguries upon this capitol.* The invasion of Tuscany was once as great an exploit as a Parthian expedition would be now ; the groves of Aricia were as terrible as the Hircanian forests ; to have crossed the little river Liris, the boundary of Latium, excited as much amaze as Cæsar's invasion of Britain, shut out as it is from the whole world. The Tiber bed, now too confined for the waste water of our baths and fountains, was for centuries the boundary of an empire, which at the present day extends from the Euphrates to the Atlantic."

"And yet," observed another, "it has always appeared to me that the contrasts between the ancient and the actual condition of our country, no matter how wonderful, are neither so astonishing nor instructive as the series of causes by which a change so unparalleled has been brought about.

"Other empires as well as that of Rome have been mighty ; those, for instance, of the Medes, Persians, and Macedonians ; but Rome, alone, has grown from insignificance into unexampled grandeur, as if by a

* "Sora (quis credat ?) et Algidum terrori fuerunt ; Satricum atque Corniculum provinciæ. De Verulis et Bovillis, pudet ! Sed triumphavimus. Tibur nunc suburbanum, et aestivæ Præneste deliciæ nuncupatis in capitolio votis petebantur—Idem nemus Aricinum quod Hercynius saltus—Tiberis quod, Euphrates," &c.—*Flor.* 1. i. 11.

uniform law of nature. Observe the slow but incessant increment of its dominion ; struggling, like the infant Hercules, for *existence*, under the kings, for *liberty*, under the earlier consuls, then, for *territory*, next, to vindicate its faithful allies, finally, for *ascendancy* over the Italian states—Terminus never receding an inch—perpetually, although imperceptibly advancing during five centuries of hard-fought campaigns abroad, of faction and civil bloodshed at home ; and you must be satisfied, that the power which now overshadows the earth was contained in the fortified encampment of Romulus, in its entirety, just as the acorn contains the oak.

“ It is little to the purpose to fix the springhead of Roman greatness in that age when, flushed with victory and unenervated by indulgence, Rome at the head of the warlike and well-disciplined states of Italy started on the career of foreign conquest. As well might a geographer set down the fountains of the Nile at the point where the inundation first bursts over Egypt. ‘ Once masters of Italy itself,’ says Polybius, ‘ the Romans in a little time subjugated all other nations ;’ not a little aided in that enterprise by the resources then acquired by being exempted from fear of attack and embarrassment at home. Hence, to ascertain the origin of that impetus which propelled the chariot of victory with such irresistible rapidity under Scylla, Pompey, and the Cæsars, we must look back five hundred years, and examine the character of the influences which presided over the birth, and contributed to form the character of the Romans.*

“ It may sound paradoxical,” pursued the senator, “ but nothing can be more certain, than that to the *infamy of their origin* they were indebted for *their greatness*, and that a consciousness of *domestic weakness* first urged them forth on the career of conquest.

“ The town of Romulus, from the outset, was held in general execration, as having been founded by a

* Polyb. Hist. l. vi. ver. fin.

fratricide, and peopled with delinquents and fugitives from all the surrounding states. This excited in the outlaws a counter scorn,—a fierce determination to seize by violence what was refused to solicitations ; and the conflicts which ensue form a chain of effects, evidently referable to that primitive outrage as to their prolific cause. From his birth-day as a citizen, the hand of the Roman was against every man, and every man's hand was against him ; so that the military constitution given to the new state by its founder, (the main spring of its aggrandizement,) was not of choice but of necessity ; for the people whom he had gathered together, were regarded not as the population of a peaceful town, but as a standing army, or band of marauders, encamped in a hostile country. Thus exposed eternally to the most dreadful vengeance, constancy and valour, which usually assume the air of singular magnanimity, in the case of a people so circumstanced, could hardly be distinguished from the exertions and sacrifices to which the most cowardly are often prompted by the law of self-preservation.*

“ But even still had Rome, like Veii, for example, been impregnable, or capable of being strongly fortified ; the warlike genius, thus created, must have speedily decayed ; but the seven elevations, scarcely deserving the name of hills, upon which the city was seated, extend, as you may perceive, over a space too vast to be defended, except by myriads, while no one of them was over strong by nature, or sufficiently extensive to afford room for the erection even of a moderate sized town. These apparent disadvantages of locality became manifest from an early period ; and, especially after the destruction of the city by the Gauls, it required all the eloquence and authority of Camillus, then in the zenith of popularity, to dissuade the houseless and

* “ Toujours exposés aux plus affreuses vengeances la constance et la valeur devinrent nécessaires ; et les vertues ne purent être distinguées chez eux de l'amour de soi-même, de sa famille, de sa patrie, et de tout ce qu'il-y-a de plus cher parmi les hommes.”—*Montesquieu.*

disheartened multitude from abandoning the seven hills for ever.* To him, however, and to the senate, it was plain enough that, precisely from this exposed posture of their capital was to proceed the future greatness and progress of the Romans. This would force them out to meet the invader before he reached their frontiers, instead of expecting him behind their walls ; this would make the Roman soldier invincible in the field. Those only may retreat or fly who have a refuge ; the Roman would know that he had none ; and, while the inaccessible fortresses of his opponents, perched like eyries on the surrounding heights and mountains, were constantly tempting *them* to give way under the shock of battle, the very weight and urgency of the charge would rouse the Roman to fight with desperation, in order to ward off ruin from hearths and altars destitute of every rampart save *his* breast. These desperate exertions to enlarge its territory, and the stout resistance which met them on every side, served to concentrate, by times, and give greater elasticity to the forces of the rising state. Rome, like her own eagle, rejoiced and grew strong amid these storms. Her conquests were few and insignificant—her victories beyond number. Without being able to advance with much rapidity, she still made her power felt ; and exerted, in a very limited sphere, for centuries, an energy destined to be one day fatal to the universe.†

“ Nor was all the training and invigorating trials of five centuries too much to prepare the Romans for that struggle, in which their very existence was staked against that of their competitors for the prize of universal empire. The fate, which left Carthage a heap of ruins, must have been that of the city which

* Livy has composed for the warrior patriot an harangue full of eloquence, force, and picturesque effect.

† “ Rome faisant toujours des efforts, et trouvant toujours des obstacles, faisait sentir sa puissance sans pouvoir l'éteindre, et dans une circonference tres petite, elle exerceoit à des vertues qui devoient être fatals à l'univers.”—Montesquieu.

now excites your wonder, as it does that of the world, if Hannibal had known as well how to make use of victory as to win it. If, instead of loitering in Campania, and wasting his fury to no purpose in ravaging the country along his tardy march, he had advanced, directly upon Rome, he might have mounted this capitol in triumph, five days after the fatal overthrow of Cannæ. But he let slip the fatal opportunity, and fortune forsook him for those who knew how to use her better.

“ The senate—a body which showed itself great, not once, but always, and ever greatest in extremities—rallied the remnant of our almost annihilated armies, and so completely re-established public confidence, as to make *ridiculous* the attempt of the Carthaginian to besiege the city.* While he approached by the Latin way, reinforcements for the garrisons of Spain were seen marching forth from the gates on the Janiculum; and the very ground on which he pitched his tents, away, yonder, along the Annio, brought the usual price, being set up at auction in the forum. By such admirable devices of the senate, and under the conduct of Fabius,† the state not only retrieved her tremendous losses, but was soon in a condition to carry the war into the heart of Africa. And, after having fixed his talons on prostrate Italy, and, as it were, cruelly lacerated its very vitals for fifteen long years, the most terrible of our foes was obliged to relinquish his hold, and hasten to resist the conquering Scipio, who was thundering at the gates of Carthage.

“ ‘Never,’ says the historian, ‘was there a greater day for Rome, than that on which Hannibal and Scipio encountered each other, with numbers equally valiant,

* There stands, near the fountain of Egeria, a ruin usually called “il tempio di redicolo, or ridiculo;” but whether it has been so called because erected in derision of Hannibal’s attempt, or to mark the spot from which he sounded a retreat, the antiquarians cannot well determine.

† “ Qui cunctando restituit rem.”

and well disciplined, upon the field of Zama. Before the signal for battle, the generals met, it is said, in sight of the two hostile armies, and stood for a moment in mute admiration of each other ; but, soon they parted from the fruitless conference for peace, presently to meet in the encounter which decided the dominion of the world. From Carthage to Corinth, from Corinth to Numantia, the conflagration spread, raging through all nations, far and near, not in succession, but simultaneously ; as if the tempest of our ambition had scattered the fire of these devoted cities until the whole world was wrapt in flames.'

" Up to this crisis of our affairs," continued Lucan, " every thing that is beautiful, egregious, *pious, sanctified*, magnificent, combines to form the Roman character.* The first hundred years of this era in which Macedonia, Africa, Greece, Sicily, Spain, were vanquished, may well be designated 'a golden age.' The ensuing century, although not without its glories, (for to it belong the victories over Jugurtha and the Cimbri, the Mithridatic, Parthian, Gaulic, German, and Britannic conquests,) may still be regarded the first in disasters and infamy, even of the ages of slavery, which since then have passed over Rome ; because it was towards its close that the source of all our glories, the old republican constitution, was overthrown."†

* In addition to some illustrations already given of the Roman so-called piety, the following may be cited from Cicero, whose writings afford several other passages still more to this purpose :—" Ut enim admodum adolescens, cum fratre, pari pietate et industria praedito, paternas inimicitias magna cum gloria est persecutus." — *Acad. Quæst.* l. iv. 1.

† Florus.

CHAPTER III.

1ST SEN.—“Hence! To your homes, be gone.”

(To the Citizens.)

CORIOLANUS.—“Nay, let them follow;

The Volces have much corn; take these rats thither,
To gnaw their garners:—worshipful mutineers,
Your valour puts well forth; pray follow.”

“From ploughs and harrows sent to seek renown,
They fight in fields, and storm the shaken town.
No post of life from toils of war is free,
No change in age or difference in degree.
We plough and till in arms: our oxen feel,
Instead of goads, the spur and pointed steel;
Th' inverted lance makes furrows in the plain:
Ev'n time, that changes all, yet changes us in vain.
Our helms defend the young, disguise the grey;
We live by plunder, and delight in prey.”

Dryden's Virgil, b. ix. 818.

BUT these were high-flown exaggerations which the Romans of the empire naturally enough indulged in, with respect to the virtues and felicity of the republican era; they are far from being sustained even by the showing of their own writers. During the fierce struggles for independence, consequent on the expulsion of the Tarquins, it was natural that the Hellenic, Etruscan, and Sabine arts and civilization, brought in by the constant stream of immigration, should fall into neglect rather than make progress. Nor was the lot of the commonalty much bettered by the change of the constitution.

“Scarcely were the Tarquins driven out,” says Sallust, “when the aristocratic ascendency began to lord it, and to harass the plebeians. The consuls became as despotic and cruel as the kings had ever been. Humble industry was expelled from its hereditary farm by petty tyrants; and the mass of the people were jealously excluded from the advantages of

the state. Exasperated by this maltreatment—ground down to the earth by the heartless laws regarding property devised by the ruthless avarice of the nobles—exhausted both of their blood and substance to carry on incessant wars which won no advantages for *them*,—the plebs at last seized their arms, and forsaking ‘the city,’ took post and deposited their household gods upon the ‘mons sacer.’”*

Men in years, who had grown grey in the practical details of war and peace, conducted the government of the state ; distinct regulations excluded before a certain age from the magistracy ; the people were perpetually engaged in the disputes of debt, about patrician prerogatives, about *meum* and *tuum* ; were called out anew to warfare almost annually, and had only the brief interval between the campaigns for re-establishing their private economy, disordered during the absence of the father of the family. In such a state of things, where could be room for scientific efforts ? The whole of Roman culture, therefore, had retrograded, especially since the erection of the republic ; and we shall see in the next period intellectual cultivation introduced as a foreign luxury, to which the genuine old Romans were inimical.†

In the exact sciences, even according to Cicero,‡ who strains all his art and erudition to screen the ignorance of those ages, they soared no higher than land surveying, and some simple methods of keeping and casting up accounts. To make a digest of the materials collected for the twelve tables by Sp. Postumius Albus, A. Manlius, and P. Sulpicius Camarinus, sent to Athens on that mission,§ it was necessary to employ a foreigner—a Greek, Hermedorus, of Ephesus.|| In the year 402 of the town, a splendid

* Ap. S. August. de Civ. Dei.

† Cab. Cycl. Hist. of Rome, vol. i. b. i. ch. 10.

‡ Tusc. Quæst. l. i. 2, 3.

§ Liv. l. iii.

|| “Fuit et Hermedori Ephesii legum, quas decemviri scribebant, interpres publice dicata, &c.”—Plin. l. xxxiv. 5.

sundial was brought amongst other plunder from Sicily to Rome, and forthwith set up in the forum, without its occurring to any one to adapt its position to the meridian. But to the great surprise of the senate and the people, nothing could be done at Rome with a clock which had gone extremely well at Catana. Thinking the first might be bewitched, another was tried by Quintus Marcius Philippus, with what success may be conjectured. Up to the conquest of Asia their temples were without statues, their only idols being rude blocks of wood, a spear, and matters of earthenware.*

The Roman state, in fact, from its origin, and according to its first constitution, was nothing else than a well-organized school of war, a permanent establishment for conquest,—Rome, not so much a city as a place of arms,—the head-quarters of a people of warriors, disdaining every art but agriculture, which was pursued as supplementary and indispensable to the success of their campaigns—for which its burly toils were an excellent novitiate. Every thing connected with the culture and management of land was on that account ever held in honour—made a religion by them; while all sedentary trades and arts were consigned, as servile and sordid, to slaves. Among the Greeks, almost all the celebrated, and in general most of the proper names, were derived from gods and heroes, and had a poetical lustre, and glorious significance. But the most renowned among the Roman families, such as the Fabii, Lentuli, Pisos, Ciceros, and many others, were taken from agricultural produce; while others, still more prosaic, were derived from the numbers—such, for instance, as Octavius, Secundus, Septimus, Quintus. Hence the acquisition of land was the first and last thought of the Roman. Between plebeians and patricians there was a perfect

* “Mirum que mihi videtur cum statuarum origo tam vetus in Italia sit, lignea potius aut fictilia Deorum simulacra in delubris dicata, usque ad devictam Asiam; unde luxuria.”—*Plin. Hist. l. xxxiv. 6.*

agreement, at least on this one point, as there was in the eagerness of both to invade the neighbouring nations, in the hope of securing large tracts of the new conquests. But as the patricians were mostly invested with all the high offices and dignities in war as well as peace, they knew how to turn all the opportunities of conquest to the best advantage.* It became a prevailing, and not ineffective feeling, with great leaders, from a very early period, decidedly during the Punic wars, that public services confer a right to look upon and use the state as property. In reliance on their party in the forum, who knew how to prevent inquiry, or, at least, to frustrate its objects, they took possession of the “*ager publicus*,” or public lands, at pleasure, and that in the most fertile as in the most fruitful regions. The nobles formed thereby, even in these early times, the princely estates which swallowed up by degrees the little possessions of the small proprietors, forming, in fact, the flower of the Italian race. Sometimes, indeed, as well with regard to similar abuses as in reference to this, strong measures were taken. To redress this crying grievance, admitted as such by the wisest and best men of the day, the elder Gracchus, shocked by the state of misery and solitude to which its working had reduced the fairest tracts, even of Etruria, first commenced to agitate for an agrarian law. But the patricians made the pride of Cornelia pay dearly for his temerity. Even so early as the middle of the second Punic war, the poorer burghers and middle class were so oppressed by war taxes, that the great had full opportunity of purchasing many estates for themselves, and incorporating them with their previous possessions. This impoverishment of the lower and middle classes in the interminable wars whereby the great and leading personages became enormously wealthy and all-powerful, as well as the attractions offered to emigrants to Rome, induced even then the burghers of the

* Vide the Phil. of Hist. by Fred. von Schlegel, Robertson's Transl. vol. i. p. 324.

municipal towns to repair thither, in the hope to creep into the list of citizens, to live on the distribution of victuals, exempt from heavy imposts, and entertained with constant shows ; and thus were their fellow-townsman who remained behind more over-powered than ever by the public burdens. Whole tracts of Italy were desolated, especially in the social war, not only through the direct devastations practised by the hostile parties, but more especially by the merciless proceedings of the senate against all who, during the confusion, had been chargeable with faults of any description.

But exactly in proportion to the decrease in the number of free citizens, was augmented the number and motley mixture of slaves.

“ The senate and the Roman people,” says Sallust, “ had treated each other with mutual forbearance and respect, in the administration of the commonwealth, up to the fall of Carthage. No contests from inordinate ambition had taken place as yet between rival leaders ; because all orders of men were kept in salutary restraint, by the apprehension of foreign enemies ; but no sooner was this dread removed than the insolent and headstrong passions, which usually attend prosperity, began to foment under the auspices of the domestic security so long sighed for, worse evils than those which had been dreaded from invasion. The nobles, no longer satisfied with pre-eminence in the state, aspired to despotism ; while the democracy imagined that they were slaves unless they trampled on the constitution ;—and thus was the ill-fated commonwealth torn to pieces by every species of violence between two rival factions.

“ At first the strength of the aristocracy, concentrated and permanent in its nature, proved too much for the popular power, dispersed through multitudes, and liable on that account to be easily dissolved. The few usurped all the honours and advantages of the republic, and shifted from themselves on the people the whole burden of the state—burdens which they had

augmented beyond measure, to suit their own selfish interests and ambition ; and heaping outrageous ingratitude upon injustice, it was not unusual with them to expel from their humble homes and inheritance, in order to clear an estate, or augment a pleasure-ground, the widows and orphans of the very men who had squandered their blood in foreign conquests, that a heartless oligarchy might gain triumphal honours, and have a wider field for oppressions and rapacity.

“ ‘ The beasts of the field,’ cried a patriot of these days, ‘ have their coverts and their dens for shelter ; while those who have fought and bled to secure the empire of the world for Italy, partake indeed of light and air, but of no other earthly comfort ; wandering from place to place with their wretched wives and little ones, without house or home.—For generals to exhort such soldiers to fight for their “ altars and ancestral tombs ” is bitter mockery. What more insulting than to entitle “ lords of the earth ” a people, few of whom possess a sepulchre or a fire-side.’

“ It was provided by the laws that the conquered lands should be parcelled out among the people ; but the nobles had contrived to monopolise the entire, cultivating the vast tracts they had acquired, not even by free labourers, but by colonies drafted from the depots of war captives and the slave marts ; half-starved and forced by ignominious stripes to work in fettered gangs by day, and at night consigned to cheerless dungeons, called ‘ *ergastula*,’ most frequently under ground. Thus were the brave and independent yeomanry, the pride and bulwark of their country, soon everywhere succeeded by those unfortunate bondmen—an abscess in the vitals of the republic, to which they were eternally formidable on account of their wrongs, their numbers, and their despair. It was by the light of the misery consequent on this misrule, which he every where beheld, even in the fairest tracts of Etruria, as he was on his way from Rome to Numantia, that Tiberius Gracchus was inspired with the

determination to redress this state of things, or perish, as he did, in the attempt."

"It may be," says the same historian, "that the Gracchi were too intemperate and overbearing in their enterprises for reform—'sed bono vinci satius est quam malo more injuriam vincere'—but the aristocracy were as unwise as they were sanguinary in the use of their triumph over them; and multitudes were exiled or slaughtered with indiscriminate barbarity." This did not augment the power of their order; but it dreadfully exasperated the people, who, eagerly seizing the long wished-for opportunity for revenge, which arose out of the disgrace brought upon the Roman arms soon after, through the unblushing venality and corrupt practices of the nobles during the Jugurthan war,—elevated to the consulship, their darling champion, Caius Marius of Arpinum—a man of their own caste, gigantic in bodily and mental energies, and animated with scornful hostility against the oligarchs.

“‘ The nobility are sore wrath against me, Romans,’ said Marius from the rostrum, ‘ because you have commanded me to carry on the war against Jugurtha. Let me beg of you to reconsider my appointment, lest you should repent of not having selected for this momentous commission some one of these noble lords, beyond—some scion of an ancient house, who prides himself upon a magnificent array of ancestral images, and upon the virtues of his forefathers,—having none of his own,—some carpet knight, who, after bringing embarrassment, ruin, and disgrace upon your affairs by his ignorance and presumption, may abandon the conduct of the war to some plebeian lieutenant, like myself, while he retires to study the Greek writers upon strategy in the silken umbrage of his tent. Of trophies won by others, Romans, I can make no parade; but, if required, I can produce the spoils and standards which this right hand has torn from your enemies,—the military guerdons presented me on many a field of battle. In defect of images I

may point to the scars upon my breast and visage, and claim nobility, not by patent or inheritance, but from exploits achieved by a warrior's toils, and at the risk of life. By these effeminate aristocrats, I am accused of meanness and rusticity ; because, forsooth, my frugal board is not signalized for dainties and the antics of hired buffoons. Quirites, to these weighty charges I plead guilty ; for I had learned from your sturdy sires, and my own, that effeminate trifling is for the sex—labour and hardy enterprise for men. What sheer absurdity in this silken tribe, to think of exchanging “ arts which they love” for your rough service. Oh, let them carouse and waste their hours in dalliance ; and, where their youth has been wasted, there, also, let them spend their age—in feasting, in licentiousness, and in veiling, by vile gauds of drapery, the ravages which profligacy has made upon their shattered frames. After degrading themselves by every vileness, let them not presume to contest the conduct of your armies with one who longs for the fatigues and perils of campaigns more passionately than they do for lascivious banquets.”

The aristocracy were humbled, and made to feel, at the hands of the ferocious conqueror of the Cimbri, the cruelties which they had so wantonly inflicted ; but they speedily regained their old position under the leadership of C. Cornelius Sylla, whose aim and entire policy was to crush the democratic power, and reinstate the oligarchs. The massacres and atrocities, on both sides, were awful. The parricidal conflict raged in every region, street, and sanctuary of Rome ; in every city and hamlet of Italy.* But the havoc was far from terminating with the war. Upwards of seventy thou-

* On this occasion we may cite an observation made not by any father of the church, or any Christian moralist, but by a celebrated German historian, who was in other respects an enthusiastic admirer of the republican heroism of the ancients :—“ Rome, the mistress of the world,” says he, “ drunk with the blood of nations, began now to rage in her entrails.”—*Schlegel, Phil. of Hist.* vol. i. p. 335.

sand of the people were put to the sword by Sylla, the day he entered Rome; four thousand, confined in one of the public buildings, were slaughtered in cold blood, after they had given up their arms, on conditions; but the atrocities perpetrated in detail, during the reign of terror which ensued, under the "proscription," caused the survivors to envy those who had perished in these scenes of indiscriminate slaughter. Lists of the "proscribed" were hung up in the forum, and an immense reward was offered for each head; it was made a capital offence to harbour or shelter the doomed; their properties were declared forfeited, and their children and grand-children incapable of holding office in the state. Immediately, unoffending citizens were fallen on and butchered in the face of day, in the streets, and in the temples, their heads cuts off and brought before the tribunal of the magistrates; wives closed their doors against their husbands, slaves betrayed their masters, brothers murdered brothers, and sons might be seen bearing the gory visages of their fathers, to claim the reward secured them by the law.

These atrocities were not confined to Rome. Murder and confiscation spread all through Italy. The citadels and walls of towns which had sided with the democratic party were pulled down, and those of their unfortunate inhabitants that escaped proscription and the sword were fined and taxed excessively. Some places, especially in Etruria, were entirely depopulated, and the houses and lands bestowed on the soldiery of the ascendant faction, who thus contrived to provide for three and twenty legions, or upwards of one hundred and thirty thousand men, with their families. In fine, extermination paused only when reminded that, if the vanquished party was entirely rooted out, there would remain no subjects to oppress.

CHAPTER IV.

“ I see before me the gladiator lie :
He leans upon his hand,—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop’d head sinks gradually low,
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder shower ; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone !

Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail’d the wretch who won.”

“ Infesta, mihi credite, signa ab Syracusis illata sunt huic urbi.
Jam nimis multos audio Corinthis et Athænarum ornamenta laudanteis miranteisque, et antefixa fictilia deorum Romanorum ridenteis. Ego hos malo propios deos, et ita spero futuros, si in suis manere sedibus patientur.”—*M. Catonis, Orat. pro Oppia Lege. Apud Liv. Hist. l. xxxiv. 4.*

“ Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes
Intulit agresti Latio.”—*Hor. l. ii. Epist. ep. 3.*

No wonder that the muses kept aloof from the lair of the she-wolf. The partiality and research of the most learned Varro, of Marcus Tullius, and of Atticus, have been exerted in vain to discover any vestige of literature, any glimmering of intellectual culture, during the first five hundred years of the city ; their labours only served to place it beyond doubt that nothing of the kind ever existed.* Even in the after ages, when the muses shared the general fate, and were doomed to minister round the throne of the empress city, no intellectual progress or development, strictly speak-

* “ Per cinque secoli ‘ non conoscessero che l’ armi, e la marra,’ Cicerone stesso, di cui non vi ebbe mai il più zelante scrittore nel sostener le glorie della sua patria, non ha potuto rinvenire argomenti, che con qualche probabilità dimostrassero, avere i Romani fino da’ primi secoli coltivate le scienze. La tragedia, la commedia, il poema, la storia, la rettorica, la filosofia, anzi la grammatica stessa eran nomi sconosciuti tra loro.”—*Tiraboschi Storia della Litterat. tom. i. l. i. par. 3, passim.*

ing, ever arose in Rome. Of the Latin poets, Lucretius and Tibullus alone were natives of Rome. The same is true, with a few exceptions, of the prose writers. There is scarcely any exception with regard to those who were distinguished in the fine arts. The muses first got admission in the train of conquest, led in chains, like the other victims of rapacious war ; and it was by stealth, and under the ban of the state, that they exerted their arts to propitiate the favour and pander to the gratifications of the proud and voluptuous nobles ; men who, having enriched themselves by violence, were impatient for immediate enjoyment. It is after the conquest of Sicily and Magna Grecia that we discover the first symptom of a taste for dramatic poetry. About the year 514 of the city, *Livius Andronicus*, the freedman of *M. Livius Salinator*, ventured to write a play. He was probably one of the multitude of Greek captives brought in from Southern Italy, “ vagabonds who had learned in the East, and in Greece Proper, the art to make themselves agreeable as ministers of the passions.”* Nor could it have happened, that, among a proud aristocracy, in the possession of immense wealth and influence, an avidity for polite accomplishments would not have arisen, when it is recollected that in the time of Flaminius and the elder Scipio, no less than a thousand Greeks of the most distinguished families, who had enjoyed the philosophical and rhetorical culture of their native cities, were at that period distributed as hostages among the great patrician houses.† Such men as Panætius and Polybius were among the number. But it was as a luxury, an amusement, as a necessity of political life, and not as a natural result of any progressive development, that this new civilization was brought in ; it was provided and served up like other dainties to the haughty conqueror, who regarded with nearly equal disdain those who ministered to his grosser appetites, and those

* Cab. Cycl. Hist. of Rome, vol. i. p. 150.

† Ibid, p. 260.

who catered for his intellect. “ It was only the little circle of educated aristocrats that took up a matter which it regarded as its own cause, but which never became the cause of the nation.”*

The whole public life of the Greeks, as well as their mythology, was interwoven with, and enlivened by all the charms of a poetry, in which the enthusiasm of the most vivid feelings of nature, a blooming, fertile, captivating fancy, and an intuitive perception of manners and life, are combined with a delicacy of tact, a purity and harmony of taste, excluding all exaggeration, all false ornament. With *them*, the public spectacles, games, and popular festivals were so many theatres for poetry ; nay, the gymnastic exercises, and music, or the art of the muses, including not only melody, but the poetry of song, were the ground-work, and formed almost the whole scope of a high polite education among the Greeks. It was by the stirring odes and other elaborate compositions recited at the Isthmian games that the Hellenic confederacy was knit together, and the sacred flame of patriotism kept bright in Greece ; and when we reflect on the charm and amenity of Homer, the elevation of *Æschylus*, and the noble beauty of Sophocles, and remember that they wrote for the people, were criticized and crowned by the people, our admiration of the civilization of the Greeks must approach to wonder. But no tincture of letters, or of taste for elevated or refined sentiment, ever penetrated the brutalized and ferocious masses of the Roman people.† Their poetry lay elsewhere than in rhapsodies of old Homer, or in Pindaric odes. It must be sought for in the festive games of the Circus, but above all, in those theatrical combats, where the gladiator, wrestling with death,

* Cab. Cycl. Hist. of Rome, vol. i. p. 248.

† “ Chez un peuple où des centaines de lions et d’éléphans et des milliers de gladiateurs étaient sacrifiés à l’amusement des spectateurs, que le vue de sang pouvoit seule émouvoir toute sensibilité pour les souffrances, et les douleurs morales de la haute tragédie ne devoit-elle pas être émoussée ?”—*Schlegel*.

knew how to fall and die with dignity. When Rome would "build up all her glories in one shrine," the Colisæum was erected, where all orders and sexes of the nobility and the people, with the magistracy, the colleges of the priesthood, and the vestal virgins grew drunk, and raged with ecstasy over the horrid carnage and murderous combats of the arena. "Thus did a thirst for blood, after having been long the predominant passion of the party leaders of this all-ruling people, become an actual craving—a festive entertainment for the multitude. And yet the Romans of this period excelled in jurisprudence, in the science of *meum* and *tuum* in all the manifold and intricate occurrences of life ; they were accomplished men of business, had carried domestic economy and the management of their properties to perfection ; whether in the tented field, or on the arena of political contests, they display an admirable, we might be tempted to say, a super-human energy ; so that we are often at a loss how to reconcile our admiration of these traits in their character, with the detestation provoked by their atrocious inhumanity. It was as if the iron-footed god of war, Gradiivus, so highly revered from of old by the people of Romulus, actually bestrode the globe, and at every step struck out new torrents of blood ; or as if the dark Pluto had emerged from the abyss of eternal night, escorted by all the vengeful spirits of the lower world, by all the furies of passion and insatiable cupidity, by the blood-thirsty demons of murder, to establish his visible empire, and erect his throne for ever on the earth. There can be no doubt that, if the Roman history were divested of its accustomed rhetoric, of all the patriotic maxims and trite sayings of politicians, and were presented with strict and minute accuracy in all its living reality, every humane mind would be deeply shocked at such a picture, and penetrated with profound horror and disgust."*

Up to this period, their music was of a loud or ludi-

* Schlegel, Phil. of Hist. vol. i. p. 337.

crous kind ; the flute-playing, and the drinking songs which formed their only literature, were never brought to perfection like the music and lyrical productions of the Greeks ; and the solemn sacrificial rites at which music was used, were carried on amidst boisterous screams, springs, and stamping-dances. In the comic history told by Livy of the contests of the censors and flute-players (or pipers,) the latter appear quite as village musicians, and worthy servants of Etruscan entrail inspectors.*

* Cab. Cycl. Hist. of Rome, vol. i. p. 149.

CHAPTER V.

—“Whom mighty kingdoms curtsied to,
Like a forlorn and desperate castaway,
Did shameful execution on herself.”

UP to the destruction of Carthage, the aim of all the great men had been to make Rome the mistress of all nations. This attained, it became the object of each ambitious leader to subjugate Rome to himself. Almost invariably cloaked under patriotic pretexts, the chief instrument of usurpation was the tribunate, originally the great bulwark of liberty. The Gracchi (the elder at least deserved a better fate) were followed by Apuleius Saturninus, he by Livius Drusus ; and these seditions brought on first—the social war,* which spread wider devastation in Italy than Pyrrhus, or even Hannibal ;† next—the general rising of the slaves ; and when they were crushed, (not without loss, however, and infinite disgrace,) the outbreak of the gladiators, under Spartacus, who routed the generals of the republic, took their camps, on more than one occasion, and even menaced the city at the head of 130,000 desperadoes.

Under Sylla and Marius, the forum and every street became an arena where the nobility, the knights, the people, all orders and ranks, were confounded in a gladiatorial contest for the privilege to tyrannise over the lacerated and bleeding state. The war of Sertorius was but a consequence of the proscriptions—that of Marcus Lepidus and Quinctus Catulus, a mere scintillation from the funeral pile of the dictator, was

* Appian, ii. p. 445.

† Marius and Sylla were lieutenants in this war. Cicero served under the latter as quæstor, and mentions a curious occurrence that took place as Sylla was offering sacrifice at an altar in Nola.

almost instantaneously suppressed, to make way for the parricidal and more formidable attempts of Cataline.*

The decree of fate was already recognised as inevitable by many, that Rome, having originated in monarchy, was doomed—after completing the circle of vicissitudes, under oligarchy, democracy, dictatorship—to revert *again*, and for ever, to the despotism of *one*. It was evident to all that the throes of dissolution had seized on the republic; but no one could suggest a remedy.† Still to vanquish republican Rome, even in her agony, required a genius and an energy almost more than human. Sylla might have been equal to the task, but as Cæsar said, “he did not know his letters;”—that is, he had not, by extensive learning and philosophical meditation, qualified himself to re-organise and govern, as a statesman, the empire which, as a general, he had subdued. As to the Gracchi, Cataline, and all that class of revolutionists, (the elder Gracchus, it is likely, was a well-meaning patriot,) *they* were the creatures of circumstances, and the sport of the storms they excited—mere pioneers of anarchy for Julius Cæsar, who knew how—if ever mortal did—to create his own opportunities. *He* marshalled, with as much facility and precision, the seemingly ungovernable confusion of his time, as he would have reviewed his veterans.

The crossing of the Rubicon was regarded by his opponents as an act of madness—his soldiers were made to regard it as an act of inspiration; truth was, that step resulted from the forethought and preparation of his entire life.

When the nobles interceded with Sylla for Cæsar, while still a youth, they were warned by the old dictator, with that kind of instinct by which the mighty

* Cicero ad Attic.

† “Nunc quidem novo quodam morbo civitas moritur; ut, cum omnes ea quæ sunt acta improbent, querantur, et jam clare gemant; tamen medicina nulla afferatur, neque enim resisti sive interneccione posse arbitramur; nec videmus, qui finis cedendi, præter exitium, futurus sit.”—Cic. ad Attic. l. ii. Ep. 20. ver. med.

recognise each other, that in that “ loose cinctured boy ” they were cherishing the destroyer of their order. “ He was sober at least in coming to seize the commonwealth,” as Cato said ; from his earliest years he had not only fixed his eyes upon the diadem, but measured the interval and calmly calculated every obstacle, which intervened between his dissolute and outlawed youthhood and the world’s throne. The very causes which seemed to render his project desperate, he made subservient to its accomplishment ; * and, by a dexterous management of the agencies devised for its defence, destroyed the constitution, while hewing down his country, made it appear that he was deserving of sympathy as an injured patriot ; with a species of superhuman prescience provided against calamities which to ordinary mortals would have appeared to be impossibilities, and which must have been fatal to his hopes if not anticipated. He precipitated nothing ; never let slip an opportunity ; genius made him superior even to fate itself, and taught him to construe the omens of misfortune into presages of success.† His transcendent talents in office left his colleagues completely in the shade ; his measures followed each other in luminous order, and seemed to produce the desired effects as infallibly as if they were so many laws of nature.

To bring the constitution into contempt, and to familiarise the public mind with ideas of revolution, (his first aim,) he secretly abetted such men as Cataline. His next object—to degrade the senate, and encourage democratic violence—he accomplished through the brutality of Clodius, who forced its pride and

* Cicero says that Cæsar was ever a devoted worshipper of one goddess—Royalty, to wit ; —τὴν θεῶν μεγίστην ὡστ’ ἔχειν Τυραννίδα.—*Ad Attic.* l. vii. 11.

† In landing at Adrumetum in Africa with his army, he happened to fall on his face, which was reckoned a bad omen ; but he, with great presence of mind, taking hold of the ground with his right hand, and kissing it, as if he had fallen on purpose, exclaimed, “ Teneo te, Africa ! ” (I take possession of thee, O Africa !)—Dio, l. xlii. in fin. Sueton. in vit. Jul. 59.

ornament, M. T. Cicero, into exile. But without the co-operation of Crassus and Pompey, his own rivals, he saw that the influence of the oligarchy could not be broken ; and, to the consternation of Cato and all the friends of the aristocratic order, he succeeded in forming the first *triumvirate*. This coalition subverted the republic ; Rome from that moment was at the mercy of three ambitious men, and Cæsar knew how to get rid of his two accomplices when they had served his turn. A disgraceful defeat and death in Parthia relieved him of Crassus, whom he never dreaded ; and Pompey was every day becoming obsolete ;—reclining in listless inactivity upon his ancient laurels, he expected to be courted by that country which he would not deign to seize ; while the stupendous fabric of his renown was at once lapsing into ruin by an inevitable law, and, at the same time, undermined by an indefatigable rival.

But Cæsar had perceived from the beginning, that without an appeal to arms, the imperial crown could not be worn, and that to seize it, he must first vanquish Pompey at the head of the Roman nobles. This was the last and most desperate move of all ; and Cæsar was not the man to attempt it, until, by his conquests in Gaul, Germany, and Britain, he had disciplined his legions for Pharsalia, and raised the platform of his military fame, at least to a level with that of a general whom Rome loved, among all her conquering sons, to call the Great.

From the outbreak of the civil war all was discord, indecision, fiery impulse, perplexity, or fatal blundering amongst the Pompeians, or aristocratic party, from their precipitate evacuation of the capital, where they left the public treasury, (protected, forsooth, by religious reverence from Cæsar's grasp !) to the suicide of Cato, who slew himself at the close of the first act. With all the sanctions of law, order, and the constitution, on their side, the cause of freedom, as they called it, in their hands rapidly sunk into contempt ; while audacious rebellion seemed to wax constitutional, and pros-

pered, from day to day, under the auspices of Cæsar. It was the impression of his enemies,* that, like Marius and Sylla, he would have slaughtered all before him; but Cæsar “knew his letters,” and instead of that won all hearts along his march, by his forbearance, and caused himself to be received in Rome, not as a usurper, but as a liberator of his country.

By the rapidity and precision of his movements, he took victory by surprise, and seemed to make a jest of enterprises, which, unless by himself, might well be regarded as impossibilities. “I am going,” he said, when starting for Spain, “to beat an army without a general, that I may hasten to beat a general without an army.” At one time his fortunes are tossed at the mercy of the winds and billows, in a fragile bark; at another, he is obliged—unhelmed and single-handed—to meet and throw back the brunt of victory; again, to plunge into the waves and swim for his life, amidst showers of destruction—in general the chances of war seem against him in the campaigns in which he annihilated five armies, in Spain, in Epirus, in Egypt, in Pontus, in Africa, and in Spain a second time; yet with such celerity and apparent ease did he achieve these enterprises, that, when upon the capitol he assumed the dictatorship, without a rival or a reclamant, he might well adopt, as the motto of his triumphs, his own celebrated despatch, “veni, vidi, vici.”

Anything more chimerical than the project of Brutus and his associates cannot be well imagined. Julius Cæsar was, on every account, regarded by the commonalty of Rome with much greater partiality than the party of the men who slew him—partizans as they were of that old patrician oligarchy, who never treated the commons, when they had the power, but with harshness and injustice; and who, if the patriots, as they called themselves, had succeeded, would have acted the tragedy over again that followed the triumph

* Cie. ad Attic.

of Sylla. But besides all this, the age had long since elapsed since the power of effecting revolutions in Rome had been transferred from the forum to the camps.

The ancient constitution of Rome was that of a municipality; its laws and institutions had reference only to a town population. As this was not peculiar to Rome—for when she started nothing was to be seen, in Italy and the surrounding countries, but cities independent of each other, or merely confederated for mutual defence,—no inconvenience resulted, but the reverse; the concentration of energies and unity of action were secured, before which, city after city fell, till all Italy, Sicily, Spain, Sardinia, Macedonia, and Achaia, (as Greece was then called,) became Roman provinces.* But this enormous extension of territory, with incessant wars of conquest, superinduced a change in the military service. In the preceding epoch, every Roman was a soldier, but every one from the consul to the private was dismissed so soon as the enemy was vanquished, and returned, like Cincinnatus, Regulus, and Cato the Censor, to look after his husbandry, with the obligation, again, to present himself when a new expedition was begun. Thus, the *populus*, or constituency of Rome, during this epoch, were identical with the armies in rustic or civilian dress, and, hence, whoever could sway these assemblies ruled the country. But, when protracted service in foreign countries, where every thing conspired to debauch the rustic simplicity of the old Roman character, and to render the soldier averse to the obscurity and tedium of agricultural life, had caused the military service to become a trade, the greater part of the subaltern officers, and all the privates, began to regard the camp as their only country, and the command of

* "Rome n'était pas dans son origine, qu'une municipalité, une commune. Le gouvernement Romain n'a été que l'ensemble des institutions qui conviennent à une population renfermée dans l'intérieur d'une ville. L'histoire de la conquête du monde par Rome, c'est l'histoire de la conquête et de la fondation d'un grand nombre de cités."—*Guizot, Hist. de la Civil.* p. 42. Bruxelles, 1838.

a favourite general as their only law. Thenceforward they became the moving power in the state.

Combined with this cause, in itself decisive against the attempt of Brutus, a variety of other circumstances had conspired to fill up the place of the lion-hearted well-disciplined plebs, with a promiscuous populace swept together by a thousand chances, utter strangers to patriotism, consisting, in a great degree, of the idly inclined and profligate of all lands, of manumitted slaves and parasites of the nobles—wretches who had no care beyond the securing their rations of bread, bacon, and wine, at the expense of the plundered provinces, and to gloat over fights of gladiators and chariot races, from the back seats of amphitheatre and circus.

By the conquered countries, all parties at Rome were alike detested ; because, from all, alike, whether leagued with Sylla or Marius, with the senate or with Cæsar, with Brutus or Mark Antony, they had experienced nothing but heartless cruelty and rapaciousness—“ long oppressed by the ministers of the republic, (of whom Verres was but an average sample,) the provinces sighed for the government of one who might be the master, not the accomplice of these petty tyrants.” And hence, Rome had reached that crisis of her destinies, in which a military despotism was inevitable.

“ So long,” said Mæcenas, in persuading Octavius to assume the monarchy, “ as Rome was a petty state, very little, if at all superior in extent, to her neighbour-burghs of Latium, she subdued all Italy ; and order and good government reigned at home ; but, since our legions have crossed the sea and the Alps, reducing islands, provinces, and kingdoms, under our dominion, we have tasted of nothing but misfortune. Within the walls, factions, conspiracies against the commonwealth, seditions in the camps, and pitched battles between the different armies abroad. Like a ship overburdened, deprived of her pilot, and crowded with frantic mutineers, the state is in distress, labour-

ing as if it would go to pieces, being tossed about in derision, by the tempests. It is not in vain, the gods have sent thee to our rescue. Resist not their will—Cæsar preserve us, or we perish?"* The fatal circle had been accomplished. In aiming their daggers at Cæsar's life, Brutus and his accomplices struck at destiny itself. Their act re-plunged the whole Roman world back into a chaos of blood and crime, just as it was beginning to pursue its predestined orbit, under the auspices of the grandest intellect ever vouchsafed to mortal.

But here again, as if too strong for fate, the good fortune of Rome prevails; and, out of ruin irretrievable, we behold her empire arising, perfect in organization, crowned with felicity and the arts of peace, and bearing on its aspect the impress of eternity.

The indomitable spirits, too haughty to brook subjection, were all cut down, or skilfully got rid of, during the horrid wars and proscriptions following the death of Cæsar, and, after the battle of Actium, are scarcely heard of more.† Thus were removed the great obstacles to the establishment of the monarchy, anxiously hailed by every other class. Again, the time was ripe; because the circuit of conquest had been completed, and there was nothing now wanted to crown and perpetuate the glory of the eternal city, but a second Numa—a lawgiver, endowed with capacity sufficiently vast to consolidate into one harmonious system, the nations, innumerable, and so diversified in character, language, and institutions, which constituted the Roman world.

For this office Octavius was better qualified than great Julius himself, whose boundless vision and insatiable love of glory urged him on, from triumph to triumph, with an impetuosity which recognised no horizon but infinitude. But his adoptive son and heir, Augustus, serene and mindful that he was not immortal, not only observed an order in the measures necessary to attain his ends, but was still more re-

* Dio, 1. lii.

† Tacit. Ann. 1. i.

markable for the admirable wisdom with which he turned these ends, themselves, according to the strict order of succession, to practical utility. Thus it was his first aim to get possession of the supreme power ; his next was to convince mankind that he was worthy of that supremacy ; this end attained, he set himself to enjoy felicity, persuaded, as an Epicurean, that this is the ultimate destiny of mortals ; and his last object was to identify himself with all that was grand and enduring upon earth ; with arts, institutions, laws, monuments, his land's language, and through these to transmit the impression of his virtues and magnificence to all future generations.

“ Thus blended,” continued Seneca, “ into one great people, the vanquished nations have resigned the hope, nay, even the wish of resuming their independence. They acknowledge that the true principles of social life, laws, agriculture, and science, first invented by the wisdom of Athens, are now firmly established by the power of Rome ; under whose auspicious influence, the fiercest barbarians have been united by an equal government and common language. They affirm, that with the improvement of arts, the human species is visibly multiplied. They celebrate the increasing splendour of the cities, the beautiful face of the country—cultivated and adorned like a garden—and the long festival of peace, which is enjoyed by so many nations, forgetful of their ancient animosities, and delivered from the apprehension of future danger. Every thing, in fine, portends that the deities, tutelary of our country, have provided that this greatness should be eternal.*

“ All nations now to Rome obedience pay,
To Rome’s great emperor, whose wide domain,
In ample territory, wealth, and power,
Civility of manners, arts, and arms,
And long renown, thou justly may’st prefer
Before all other empires.”

“ Non tamen annorum series, non flamma, nec ignis,
Æternum poterit hoc abolere decus.”

* Gibbon.

“Fallacious hope!” said the apostle; “but few centuries shall have elapsed until that scene of splendour and voluptuous elegance, the forum, shall be again a pasture field.”

“Impossible,” replied the senator; “the perfect organization of the empire, and its means for repelling external violence, forbid the belief that it could be overthrown within any given period, either by invasion or by anarchy.”

“United by language, manners, and the enjoyment of exclusive privileges, into one mighty people pre-eminent in the arts of war and government, the Italian nations form a centre equal to the weight of an empire, vast in extent, but uniform, voluntary, and permanent in its obedience. The authority of the emperors pervades the wide extent of their dominions, without an effort, and is exercised, with the same facility and effect, on the remotest frontiers, as within the prefecture of this city. This is mainly attributable to the celerity of our communications both by sea and land, and to the admirable distribution of the fleets and armies.

“The entire force of the empire consists of provincial, urban, and naval legions or brigades, to the amount of about four hundred thousand men; besides the marines of the fleets stationed at Ravenna, Misenum, Forum Juliense, the forty ships in the Euxine, and the fleets in the seas which separate Britain from Gaul and Germany; and all—legions, fleets, and provinces—are in perfect military connexion. Thus the forces stationed at Misenum and Ravenna, with their respective fleets, are sufficiently near the capital to secure its tranquillity; while, at the same time, they can be transported to any point, where exigency may require, with the greatest promptitude, and without making a detour. The shores of Gaul, Spain, Africa, Egypt, Sardinia, and Sicily, are open to the Misenum fleet; the fleet at Ravenna commands Epirus, Macedonia, Achaia, the Propontis, Pontus, Crete, Cyprus, and the East: as to the provincial legions, three suffice for Britain. The principal strength lies upon the Rhine

and Danube, consisting of sixteen legions—two in Lower, three in Upper Germany, one in Rhœtia, one in Noricum, four in Pannonia, three in Mæsia, and two in Dacia. The Euphrates is guarded by eight legions—two planted in Cappadocia, six in Syria. As Egypt, Africa, and Spain are far removed from any important scenes of warfare, a single legion is sufficient to maintain the domestic tranquillity of each of these great and happy provinces.

“Seldom, indeed, is the aid of a military force required by the civil magistrate; and thus the armies have only to guard against a foreign enemy. Instead of being confined within the walls of fortified cities—the refuge of weakness and pusillanimity—the legions are encamped on the banks of great rivers, and along the frontiers of the barbarians. The veterans, as well as the young recruits, are trained both morning and evening; and in winter-quarters under large sheds, lest their labours should receive any interruption. With arms double the weight of those used in action, they are diligently instructed to march, to run, to leap, to swim, to carry heavy burdens, to handle every species of arms, that is used either for offence or defence, either in distant engagement or at close quarters; to form a variety of evolutions; to move to the sound of flutes in the Pyrrhic or martial dance. Thus are they familiarised with war, in the midst of peace, since the effusion of blood is the only point of difference between a field of battle and a field of exercise.* For an empire thus organised, thus defended, what is there to fear from savage hordes, who tremble at the very sound of the Roman name, and frequently solicit, without success, to be admitted in the ranks of subjects?”

* Josephus.

CHAPTER VI.

“ For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it:—Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity.”

Hab. ch. ii. 11, 12.

It was with a proud complacency the Romans listened, while St. Peter pointed out to them how accurately the all-conquering force of their country, and its unprecedented grandeur had been revealed to kings and prophets, in the heart of Asia, before its name or existence had been heard of, beyond the neighbouring septs of Latium. So strongly characterized were the emblems of the 2nd and 7th chapters of Daniel, so graphic the descriptions of the prophetic visions, that, to their minds, they scarcely needed an interpreter. What other than that very empire, whose irresistible might and obstinate perseverance they had been describing to the apostle, could be referred to in that kingdom of “iron,” represented by the limbs and feet of that apparition which had so terrified King Nebuchadnezzar in his sleep; for “as iron breaketh and subdueth all things,” had not all states and kingdoms been crushed and subdued by Rome? Still more to their fancy, if it were possible, was that emblem in the 7th chapter of a wild beast, terrible and wonderful, and exceeding strong, with great iron teeth, eating and breaking in pieces, and treading down the beasts typical of the other three empires, and trampling them with its feet. In this it was impossible not to recognise an energetic epitome of the conquering career of Rome. Their intimate acquaintance with history enabled them, at a glance, to recognise, in the other emblems, the Babylonian empire, (personified in Nebuchadnezzar; see ch. 2, ver. 38; and ch. 7,

ver. 4;) the empire of the Medes and Persians, in the two arms and breast of silver, (ch. 2, ver. 32 and 39;) and in the bear, (ch. 7, ver. 5,) a striking type of their austerity of life and thirst for blood. While, with respect to Alexander the Great, and his empire, partitioned by Antipater, Seleucus, Ptolemy, and Antigonus, the predictions of Daniel bore to their minds so much the air, not of prophecies, but of histories written posterior to the events, that no shadow of doubt remained as to the Divine inspiration of the entire series of visions, when it was ascertained that they had been written several hundred years before Alexander's birth.*

This point, however, agreed upon, and the undoubted inspiration of the prophet having been tested by experience, by their beholding the first half of the prediction literally fulfilled before their eyes, St. Peter went on to interpret that portion of the prophecy which still remained to be accomplished—a perora-

* That the reader may have an opportunity, even without referring to the Bible, of considering the wonderful precision and decisive clearness of these two prophetic visions, they are given with a few explanatory remarks in Appendix B of this volume.

Even before Rome had been taken by Alaric, while the Queen of the Seven Hills was still in all her pride, there was no hesitation amongst the Christians as to the application of these predictions.—“But,” says St. Jerome, in commenting on Daniel, chapter ii., “as to the fourth kingdom, which *obviously*—‘perspicuè’—perspicuously applies to the Romans, it is said, to be of iron, because it crushes and conquers all; but its feet and toes are said to be partly of iron and partly of potter’s clay, which we behold made *most manifest*—‘manifestissimè’—in our own days;” and then he shows how the iron power begins to totter, by reason of intestine wars and the barbaric invasions.—“Sicut enim in principio nihil Romano imperio fortius et durius fuit, ita *in fine rerum*, nihil imbecillius: quando et in bellis civilibus, adversum diversas nationes, aliarum gentium barbararum indigemus auxilis,” &c.—*S. Hieron. in Dan. Prophe.*, cap. ii., tom. iii., Op. p. 1081. Parisiis, 1704. He is equally decisive on the vision in chapter vii. of the same prophecy. “The fourth, which *now*, at the time of this writing,—‘nunc,’—sways the earth, is the Roman empire; of which it is said in the vision of the statue, ‘its thighs and legs were of iron,’ ” &c.; and then he proceeds, “how apposite an emblem of the Roman empire was that terrible monster with iron teeth,” &c.

tion, the very reverse of flattering to Roman arrogance.

“Thou, O king,” said Daniel, “sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was of fine gold;” (the empire of Babylon or of the Chaldees, as the prophet himself explains it;) “its breast and its arms of silver;” (the empire of the Medes and Persians, who took Babylon under Cyrus, a Persian by the father’s side, by the mother’s side a Mede;) “its body and thighs of brass;” (the Macedonian, or Greek empire;*) “its legs of iron” (republican or conquering Rome;) “its feet” (the declining empire) “part of iron and part of clay.”

“Hitherto,” pursued St. Peter, “we have been verifying prophecy by our own knowledge and experience of past events; it remains for us now to take the sequel of this same prophecy as our guide into that future, which, without Divine revelation, is impervious to human foresight. Mark well the destiny that awaits this ‘iron empire,’ now actually bestriding the world, ‘terrible and wonderful, and exceeding strong,’ ‘greater than all the preceding empires, devouring the whole earth, and trampling it down, and breaking it in pieces.’

“‘Thus thou sawest, O king,’ says the prophet, ‘till a stone was cut, without hands, from a mountain, and it smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces. Then was

* “This third kingdom,” says St. Jerome, “is the empire of Alexander and of his successors, rightly compared to brass, which of all metals is the most sonorous, and rings, when struck, most clearly, the chime reverberating far and wide; so that it is an emblem not only of the wide spread renown and empire of Alexander the Great, but of the unrivalled eloquence of the Grecian tongue.”—“Et regnum tertium aliud, quod imperabit universæ terræ.—Alexandrum significat et regnum Macedonum, successorumque Alexandri. Quod rectè æneum dicitur; inter omnia enim metalla æs vocalius est, et tinnit clariùs, et sonitus ejus longè latèque diffunditur, ut non solum famam et potentiam regni; sed et æloquentiam Grecæ sermonis ostenderet.”—*S. Hier. ubi sup.*

the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold,' (all the power, art, renown, and opulence amassed by successive empires,) 'broken to pieces together, and became like the dust of the summer threshing floor.' Behold how perishable the grandeur which you call 'eternal !' 'Baths, palaces, amphitheatres, arches, pillars, trophies, temples, and all the rest,—and 'the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them !' that is, the very places where they stood shall become a problem to the antiquarian—the very fact of their existence, a doubt !

"Yes, Fortune, as you call her, will turn back upon her steps, upon these scenes which now excite our admiration ; not only undoing, but reversing, as if in capricious mockery, every thing that had been achieved and erected upon them under her own auspices. The gorgeous tissue which, according to your poets, the three sisters wove, from exploits and triumphs under kings, consuls, emperors—the *memorabilia* of a thousand years—shall be rent to pieces and flung to the deriding winds.

'As the earth was before so shall it be.'

Desolate as when Evander crossed it with Eneas, shall be, again, that theatre of all that is now most renowned, mighty, and magnificent ; the Roman forum shall be, *again*, a pasture field ; the Palatine a heap of ruins,

'Matted and mass'd together ;'

like the vision of a dream, a mirage of the desert, the empire of the Caesars shall vanish ; the home of so many nations, shall become their grave ; the seven hills, a 'marble wilderness.'

"And yet is Rome destined to be an 'eternal city,' imperishable as the earth itself, over which its sceptre shall still be wielded ; for, mark the conclusion of the prophecy :—'And the stone,' (cut without hands, from a mountain, the church built on Peter, taken, as it were, from the side of the Redeemer, as Eve was

taken from the side of the *first* Adam,) ‘the stone that smote the image,’ (the Pagan empire of Rome,) ‘became a great mountain and filled the entire earth.’* That is, according to the prophet’s own interpretation, the kingdom of heaven; the empire, or Church of Christ, which hath been in progress of erection during the entire cycle of these empires,† and which is to continue advancing to perfection to that cycle’s close, shall arise upon the ruins of this pagan empire, ‘never to be destroyed.’ Not like the human empires that we have beheld, ‘passing from nation to nation,’ from Chaldees to the Medes and Persians, from them to the Greeks, from the Greeks to yourselves; ‘*This* kingdom shall not be delivered to another people;’ even ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ True it is, the powers of darkness shall rouse up all the terrible forces of this ‘iron’ empire of yours, and all the passions of corrupt humanity, against it; and formidable as have been the trials and resistance through which you have described the city and empire of Romulus struggling for existence, for territory, for supremacy, they are but trivial compared with the opposition this new Roman empire shall have to encounter. ‘But why have the nations raged, and the people devised vain things,’ (for its destruction?) ‘The kings of the earth shall rise up, the princes conspire together against the Lord and against his Christ; but he that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them;’ and the rock shall crush to pieces and consume all those hostile kingdoms. ‘For

* When we reflect upon the manifold mysteries often involved in the same expression or sentence of Holy Writ, (as in the interpretation given of Melchisedek, for instance, Hebrews vii.,) it will be readily admitted, that, while the “rock cut, without hands, from the mountain,” *must* mean, either Christ our Lord, (as St. Jerome will have it,) or the Church of Christ, or St. Peter, it *may* mean, and be emblematical of all three.

† The “*Preparationes Evangelicæ*,” or preparations for the coming of the Messiah, and the establishment of his everlasting kingdom, commenced emphatically with the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, and the rebuilding of the temple.—See *Bossuet’s Univer. Hist.*

judgment shall sit in heaven,' (concludes the prophet—ch. 7, ver. 9 and 28—interpreting the other vision of the four great empires,) that the last effort to reinstate the tottering sway of paganism may be frustrated, and ' that its empire may be broken in pieces and perish even unto the end ; that the kingdom, and power, and the greatness of the kingdom *under the whole heaven*, may be given to the saints of the Most High ; whose kingdom' (thus to be established,) ' is an everlasting kingdom, and' (in it) ' all kings shall serve Him and obey Him.*

"Then shall be realized that sublime ideal of perfection described, I will say prophesied, by your own Marcus Tullius ; ' nor shall there be one law at Rome, another law at Athens, one to-day, a different one to-morrow ; but a law, one, sempiternal, and immutable, shall unite and hold together in communion all nations throughout all ages, under one common ruler and emperor of all—that God, by whom was devised, drawn up, enacted, this law, in swerving from which we swerve from our own well-being, and offer violence to human nature.'† Nay, more, it is not by force but by persuasion this new empire shall be extended and

* It will be made evident in the second volume that this passage refers to the great and final effort made for the restoration of Paganism, by Julian the Apostate.

† This sublime passage of Cicero, preserved in the writings of Lactantius, cannot fail to win a new perusal, even from those who may have read it often :—" *Nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac ; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, una lex, et sempiterna, et immutabilis continebet ; uniusque erit communis quasi magister, et imperator omnium, Deus ; ille legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator ; cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugit, ac naturam hominis aspernatus hoc ipso luet maximus poenas etiamsi cetera supplicia quæ putantur effugerit.*"—But mark the miserable incertitude as to futurity of one who could utter words deserving of the high encomium passed on them by Lactantius, who says, they are the expressions "not so much of a philosopher as of a prophet;" "non philosophi functus esset officio sed prophetæ."—*Lactant. de Vero Cultu.* l. vi. cap. 8. He quotes from the third book "De Republica," Cicero's greatest work in philosophy. It has been, in a great degree, restored to the world, through the erudition and industry of his eminence Cardinal Mai.

established ; it shall be held in subordination by charity and faith, and not by coercion. In it ' the first shall be last ; ' ' he that humbleth himself shall be exalted ; ' ' servant of servants ' shall be its proudest title ; poverty, in that empire, will be accounted a beatitude, riches dreaded as a calamity. Chastity and penitential austerities, and the works of mercy, will be cultivated with greater enthusiasm than is, at present, felt for the ' lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life.' By submitting without a murmur to every insult and outrageous cruelty, its people shall triumph, vanquishing even all-conquering Rome, and leading captive the Quirites, the conscript fathers, the knights, the legions, with the cross upon their banners, and upon the diadem of Cæsar himself, to pay homage to the Crucified on this capitol."

CHAPTER VII.

—“Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.”—*1 Cor. i. 23.*

“By embracing the faith of the gospel, the Christians incurred the supposed guilt of an unnatural and unpardonable offence.”—*Gibbon, Hist. of Decl. and Fall, &c. ch. xvi.*

“NEVER, never, never!” cried Caius Cassius, whose scorn could restrain itself no longer; “when you talked of the destruction of this empire, I listened with indifference. Why should hallucinations such as these excite more than a smile of pity? But in these mad antitheses about supplanting pride by humility, libertinism by chastity; of substituting the love of poverty for the love of riches, the cross for the eagle; the outrage upon common sense becomes insufferable. Have you any notion, any shadowy conception, even, of what Rome, of what human nature is, or of what you are *yourself?*” Then launching forth, he showed how paganism was so interwoven and identified with the then existing order of things, that it could not be interfered with without disjointing the whole frame of the empire, overturning all existing ideas and institutions; and that the establishment of Christianity demanded, not only a revolution of the Roman government, but a subversion of society, and, what was still more absurd, a complete metamorphosis of human nature.

As long as Rome had continued in a state of isolation—having little or no intercourse with other nations except by warlike embassies, or on the field of battle—strict religious conformity was enforced, and no worship was tolerated, under any pretence, either in public or in private, but such as was in accordance with the established form; but when all the indepen-

dent nations and cities of the earth had been brought under subjection, their multifarious and motley systems became, in a certain degree, established, inasmuch as the free exercise of the superstitions peculiar to each locality was not only granted, but all were adopted by Rome herself, where every species of idolatrous worship—all the almost infinite forms of polytheism—were practised and celebrated with the greatest solemnity.* Nay more, according to the received principles of paganism, in conquering all nations, and carrying away their tutelary deities to adorn her triumphs, Rome had become the dwelling-place and sanctuary of all the gods, and as such was looked up to by the idolatrous nations as something too august and divine to be assailed. In fine, the genius of Roman power, whether attributed, as in the times of the republic, to some mysterious abstraction of the city itself, or to the person of the emperor, as from the time of Augustus, was regarded universally as supreme arbitress of gods and men.† Hence, it was self-evident, as Cassius contended, that Christianity, in assailing idolatry, must exasperate and draw down the entire weight of Roman vengeance, which nothing created had been able to resist. That besides all this, what Christianity would extirpate was so interwoven with every transaction, and thought, and institution, that went to make up the whole complexity of existence, that to remove it was to unravel or rend in pieces the entire tissue, weft and woof, of private, public, of intellectual and of every day life. No transaction of

* Law of the Twelve Tables, quoted by M. T. Cicero, *De Legibus* : “Separatim nemo habessit deos ; neve novos, neve advenas, nisi publice adscitos, privatim colunto,” l. ii. 8. The sense is somewhat changed by a mode of punctuation, different from the above, which is not unusual :—“Separatim nemo habessit deos neve novos ; sed ne advenas, nisi publice adscitos,” &c.

“Quoties hoc patrum avorumque ætate negotium est magistribus datum, ut sacra externa fieri vetarent, sacrificulos vatesque faro, circu, urbe prohiberent; vaticinos libros conquerirent comburerentque ; omnem disciplinam sacrificandi præterquam more Romano, abolerent ?”—*Livy*, l. xxxix.

† Schlegel, *Philos. of Hist.*, vol. i. p. 347. Robertson's Trans.

importance, in war or peace, could be undertaken but by the auspices. In the senate, in the courts of law and the camp, every proceeding began and ended in idolatry ; it infected every pursuit and handicraft—every rustic office, whether of summer or winter, of seed-time or harvest, or of the vintage ; groves, fountains, hills and rivers, the earth, the elements, were under its spell. The feast and the funeral—the hymæal and the death-bed—arts, sciences, music, poetry, literature in all forms (these latter its active handmaids)—were interwoven with its rites, and imbued with its complexion. It was welded firmly into that inflexible jurisprudence, which would not bend or yield if heaven and earth were to come to ruin.*

“ Bound up with the most ennobling recollections, consecrated by patriotism, eulogized by eloquence, sanctioned by philosophy, embalmed by poetry, and rendered irresistible by all that is most fascinating in the arts ; identified with the games of circus and arena, loved by our people to distraction ; interdicting no vice, but on the contrary sanctifying every sensual indulgence, what insanity,” he pursued, “ to think that the world, enervated beyond measure, and abandoned to every gratification, will of a sudden dislike to live voluptuously and grow enamoured of austerities ; and that, too, at the dictation of a recent, an incomprehensible and ignominious creed, based upon the dogma, that the author of the universe, the Supreme, the only God, was put to death as a malefactor by a Roman magistrate ! You say that reason itself convicts idol-

* “ ‘Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum,’ was the *iniquitous* axiom of the old jurists ; for their meaning was—no matter who or what is to suffer, or what wrong or *injustice* ensue, *let the law take its course !*”—See Schlegel, *Philosophy of Hist.* vol. i. p. 346.

“ In every Roman camp there was a small chapel near the head quarters, in which the statues of the tutelar deities were preserved and adored ; and we may remark that the eagles, and other military ensigns, were in the first rank of these deities :—*an excellent institution,*” concludes Gibbon, “ which confirmed discipline by the sanction of religion.”—*History of Decl. and Fall*, ch. vi. note y. He quotes Herodian and Lipsius for the fact ; the philosophy is his own.

atry of error and impiety—agreed. But persuade the artificer, the augur, the flamen, the state functionary, as much as you please, that ‘ an idol is nothing,’* still will the idol be worshipped for its gold. Diana, Phœbus, Jupiter Optimus Maximus himself, may be the mere creatures of the imagination, but being wedded to the system by the love of mammon and of place, the more rotten and false it is proved to be, the more furiously will it be defended ; and those who live and multiply, and fatten with their progenies on the imposture, will be the fierce and merciless persecutors of all who dare to meddle with it. Alas ! old man, betake thyself to physic that may purge away this mania that practises so sadly on thy intellect ; and, what is worse, runs thee in thy decrepitude on scoffs and chastisement.”†

They collected round the apostle, recapitulated and corroborated by additional arguments all that the patrician had said. One illustrated by instances the profound and universal depravity of the times ; another dwelt with emphasis upon the fury with which society, gangrened to the very marrow, would resist the iron and the knife, and maintained that even could it be induced to submit, so mortal and deep-seated was the malady, that it must inevitably sink

* 1 Cor. viii. 4.

† The substance of Caius Cassius’ argument is, in great measure, from Gibbon’s notorious sixteenth chapter. The proceeding of the silversmiths at Ephesus gives a most vivid picture in illustration of those times.

—“A certain man, named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen, whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said : Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth ; moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods which are made with hands ; so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. And when they heard these sayings, they were all full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians !”

—*Acts of the Apostles*, xix. 24—29.

under the attempt to cure. Again, they dilated on the blindness of the public mind, its bigoted attachment to error, and portrayed, with a bold hand, the apparent absurdity and repulsive features of the system by which he proposed to displace what was so desperately cherished. To exhibit the hopelessness of attempting to reform the reigning superstition, or the reigning scepticism, they enumerated the superior qualifications for such an enterprise of the Greek and Roman sages, who had signally failed in that attempt, and dwelt upon the difficulty of making men hate to be libertines and love to be saints. He was reminded that it was an age when the lights of philosophy were universally diffused ; and, therefore, that the juncture was perhaps the most unpropitious that could have been selected, for the appearance of an illiterate Jewish fisherman, as the enlightener of nations arrived at the highest pitch of intellectual refinement. To think of eluding the vigilance of the magistrate, and of carrying on his operations in darkness, was perfectly insane—detection and chastisement were inevitably linked with the attempt. Roman vigilance darted its glance even into the darkest recesses of private life—Roman vengeance was gifted with omnipotence and ubiquity ; and a spiritual conspiracy, which calculated for its triumph upon the ruin of the empire, would be branded with public odium, and exterminated without remorse or commiseration. When they came to describe the tortures which were reserved for those who were doomed to be made examples of by Cæsar and the senate, Pudens and his son could restrain themselves no longer, but, bursting into tears, besought the apostle, on bended knees, not to rob them of their greatest benefactor, by rushing blindly, and to no purpose, upon a fate tremendous as it was inevitable. Then St. Peter, lifting up his hands and his voice together, said, “ Romans, I am not beside myself ; the arguments by which you would persuade me to despair, I regard as the pledges of my success.”

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Quid aut quantum dimisit Petrus, qui pene nihil habuit ? Sed hac in re, fratres charissimi, affectum debemus potius pensare, quam censem. Multum reliquit, qui sibi nihil retinuit ; multum reliquit, qui quantumlibet parum, totum deseruit. Certe nos et habita cum amore possidemus, et ea quæ minime habemus, ex desideriis quærimus. Multum ergo Petrus et Andreas dimisit, quando uterque etiam desideria habendi dereliquit.”—*S. Gregor. Magni, Hom. V. in Evang.*

“ And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.”—*1 Cor. i. 27, 28.*

St. Peter's Apology for himself.

“ I WAS born on the confines of a tranquil lake, embosomed in the sequestered hills of Galilee. I grew up upon its halcyon waters. I loved them from my boyhood, made acquaintance with every shadow that slept in the deep bosom of Genezareth, and held converse with every murmur uttered by the waves in rippling day and night along its shores. Even, for the fair face of heaven which smiled above it, I imbibed an enthusiastic passion, as I gazed upon it from my bark, while tending my nets by night ; and, in its thousand stars, trembling in the fathomless serenity of the deep, I seemed to catch glimpses of angel heralds, advancing from eternity before the ‘ long expected.’ My nets, my little bark, were unto me as friends—I loved my home, and even when I had been called, and that vague, but still vivid anticipation, lit up my uncouth fancy, I did not hesitate to expostulate with him whom I believed to be the Messiah, saying, ‘ Behold, we have left *all*, what, therefore, are we to get in

recompense ?' The least likely, perhaps, of all men, to become an adventurer, is an humble, contented fisherman, on a midland lake ; as for my part, I clung to the scenes and avocations of my youthhood with tenacity. On every opportunity I returned to my fishing ; and even after all the wonders I had witnessed, all the mysteries in which I had been initiated, after all the bright and exciting prospects held out to me by a Master, whose power to perform what he promised I believed to be omnipotent ; still, did he find me, after his resurrection, where first he had called me—engaged with my bark and my nets upon my native and beloved lake.

“ Neither by nature nor by education have I been gifted with high conceptions, with quickness of apprehension or with foresight. O my heavenly Master, how often didst thou rebuke us, how much oftener did we deserve to be reprehended, for being ‘ dull and stupid, and tardy of belief ?’ The national bias—our Jewish nature—seemed to have rendered us incapable of spiritual views. The occurrence of events, of which we had been repeatedly apprised, in terms the most explicit and encouraging, stunned us with consternation, and scattered us like a timid flock, when, in the midst of them, the shepherd is struck with lightning. You imagine that I am courageous, daring even to indiscretion. I *was* a coward. When my most kind and noble Benefactor was seized by ruffian hands, I fled ; when charged with being one of his adherents, even by a poor damsel, I denied my Lord and Master ; and, when urged, I cursed and swore that I had never seen his face.”

Here the apostle hid his troubled countenance in his hands ; but he could not hide the big tears which trickled down his furrowed cheeks and beard.

“ While my Master was moving through all the land, ‘ doing good,’ performing the most stupendous miracles, and was revered as the Messiah by myriads of my compatriots, and that I had been nominated by him the viceroy of his eternal kingdom, it was still with

delight I relapsed into my original obscurity. In the effulgence of his countenance I was blind—stupid while listening to uncreated Wisdom—a recreant, through a slight temptation, to Him whom I knew to be omnipotent to protect me. But *after* his death—a death of the most opprobrious character—I took my stand in the very heart of Jerusalem, and, while the city was crowded with the multitudes who had assembled for the festival, I rebuked the whole house of Israel with Deicide! When seized and brought before the Sanhedrim, I refused, at the command and menace of the princes who had put Jesus to death, to desist from proclaiming his Divinity. They scourged me, and I was filled with joy. Prisons, insults, and the bitterest persecution, since then, have been my lot. And not in me alone, but in thousands of every age, and rank, and sex, and temperament, has a similar transformation taken place. We, who were illiterate, can speak all languages; we, who were stupid, can comprehend what to the wisest is incomprehensible; we, whose desires were so grovelling, disdain the greatest gifts of fortune. Twelve poor men, of mean extraction and contracted views, have portioned out the world between them, and the most unworthy of them all, Simon Bar-Jona of Bethsaida, is on the capitol, preparing to bring the empire of Cæsar under the yoke of Christ.

“Had the career of my beloved Master terminated with his cruel and disgraceful death, must not our ambition have been inevitably extinguished, instead of having been thus inflamed? for it is not by discomfiture and in the damp airs of the tomb, that fervid enthusiasm and fearless ambition are likely to be enkindled. Therefore have I said that the seeming madness of my enterprise is the proof of my inspiration. The meanness of my origin, the manner of my life, my deficiencies, my ignoble presence, emphatically attest, that it is not by impulse of nature, or project of human wisdom, that I am here; but purely and exclusively through the behest and

impulse of Heaven. No, had not my ears heard, my eyes beheld, my hands touched and tested the truth and reality of my blessed Master's resurrection, I should, at this hour, have been busied, as of old, with my nets and my bark, and their humble interests, upon my native lake ; effectually and for ever cured of the folly which had seduced me from it for a season, and resolved within myself to live and be gathered to my fathers, in unpretending obscurity and peace. If the Spirit of truth and power had not descended upon me and the others, we should have remained as stupid, as slow to believe, as timorous as before.

“ Dream not that it is by any furtive expectation of honours, or affluence, or terrestrial aggrandisement, that I am urged upon this enterprise. I know my fate. My Divine Master—who chooseth the ‘ weak things of this world,’ and ‘ the things that are not,’ for his grandest ends, that no mistake may exist as to the virtue by which they are effected—He, as if to save me from being elated with the stupendous dignity to which he had exalted me, distinctly predicted, in the presence of my companions, that I shall terminate my labours in his service, by a violent and ignominious death. For when he had given me charge of the fold, he said, —‘ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest ; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.’ —‘ This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.’ ”*

* John xxi. 18, 19.

CHAPTER IX.

“Subrius Flavius tribunus interrogatus a Nerone, quibus causis ad oblivionem sacramenti processisset; ‘oderam te,’ inquit: ‘nec quisquam tibi fidelior militum fuit, dum amari meruisti. Odisse cæpi postquam PARRICIDA MATRIS ET UXORIS, ET AURIGA, ET HISTRIO, ET INCENDIARIUS, exstitisti.’”—*C. Tacit. Ann. l. xv. cap. 67.*

—“MEHERCULE! Is it Julius Ahala of the band Augusta once more upon the capitol? Yes, it is his mailed hand I grasp—but by Mavors, if Numa or king Brennus had met me in my rounds to-night, or yon grim effigy of Caius Marius had bounded from its pedestal with all its Cimbrian trophies, it could not more astound me. Why, Julius, it is half a lustrum since we numbered thee among the dead, and a coenotaph erected by thy comrades of the ‘guard,’ excites the horror of many a fat citizen in his evening stroll along the Nomentan way; for the painted marble* exhibits thee as being roasted in some outlandish place, by Druids, at an altar—methinks, they call it Mona in the epitaph.”

JULIUS.—“Mona is the name, Ventidius. It was there we drove the British cannibals upon the sacrificial fires they had lighted up for Roman soldiers. It is an island on the furthest coast of Britain, separated from the mountain country of Caractacus† by a narrow frith; and as it formed a rallying point for all the malcontents and rebels of the border districts, the general resolved upon reducing it; so where the strait

* The reliefs upon tombs, &c., were frequently coloured like japan work, to give greater effect to the figures. See Sir W. Gell's *Pompeiana*, vol. i. p. 104.

† For a magnificent picture by Tacitus of Caractacus, and his royal court and kindred, paraded before the Roman emperor, legions, and people, on the Campus Martius, with the speech delivered by the Akbar Khan of that day, see Appendix III.

is narrowest, he passed over the infantry on rafts ; as to the horse, they threaded their way across the shallows, or swam through the deeper channels. Before us the rugged shores were crowded with a multitude in arms. Every crag was manned, and females, resembling furies, rushed, with dishevelled hair and flaming torches, from clan to clan ; while, around the burning piles intended to torture and consume their enemies, the Druids lifted up their hands to draw down curses and confusion on our heads.* At the preternatural horrors of the scene, the men were thunderstruck ; and, as if paralysed by some incantation, stood gazing at the spectacle, as if insensible to the darts and stones that showered on them from the cliffs. But roused at length by the cheers and exhortations of the officers, and stimulating each other not to be daunted by a mob of inhuman savages, the eagles moved forward—the opposing multitudes are slaughtered, or driven on the immense fires which hemmed in their entire rear.”†

VENTIDIUS.—“Was this before the great rebellion under queen Boadice, when Londinum was abandoned ?”‡

* “Nam cruento captivo adolere aras et hominum fibris consulere deos, fas habebant.”—*Tacit. Ann.* 1. xiv. 30.

† “Igitur Monam insulam, incolis validam, et receptaculum perfugarum, aggredi parat (Suetonius,) navesque fabricatur plano alveo, adversus breve litus et incertum.—His pedes ; equites vado secuti, aut altiores inter undas, adnantes equis, transmisere.”—*Id.* 1. xiv. 29.

“Præsidium posthac impositum victis, excisique luci, sævis superstitionibus sacri.”—*Id. Ibid.*

‡ It will be seen from the following that London was the paradise of cockneys, even when it was only the Sidney of the Roman empire : “Cognomento quidem coloniæ non insigne.”

“At Suetonius mirâ constantiâ medios inter hostes Londinum perrexit, cognomento quidem coloniæ non insigne, sed copiâ negotiatorum et commeatuum maxime celebre. Ibi ambiguus, an illam sedem bello deligeret, circumspectâ infrequentiâ militis, satisque magnis documentis temeritatem Petilii coërcitam, unius *oppidi* damno servare universa statuit. Neque fletu et lacrymis auxilium ejus orantium flexus est, quin daret profectionis signum ; et comitantes in partem agminis acceperat. Si quos imbellis sexus, aut fessa ætas, *vel loci dulcedo* attinuerat, ab hoste oppressi sunt.”—*Id.* 1. xiv. 33.

JULIUS.—“ Precisely ; while Suetonius was devastating Mona, the provincials, being goaded into madness by the tax-gatherers and the garrisons, rose from one end of the country to the other ;—but before half the horrors that followed could be told, the morning’s sun would come upon us.”*

VENTIDIUS.—“ But when did you arrive ? There was no talk in the camp, even that your cohorts were ordered home.”

JULIUS.—“ It was gone in the second watch to-night, when, covered with Flaminian dust, we halted on the Tiber’s brink, and, lifting of its sacred waters in our casks, poured a libation to this ‘ hill of triumphs.’ Casting their armed bodies on the Campus Martius, down yonder near the mausoleum, the veterans sleep like infants on the mother’s lap ; but as for me, it would be impious to grant slumber to these eyes, until they had first beheld, and poured a bitter tribute over, the ruin of those sacred shrines and trophies of by-gone heroism, the sight of which first gives flame to martial ardour in the Roman.† What ! this city burned to the ground ! the monuments of Grecian art and Roman virtue consumed by fire, and that not by enemies ; but—Ay, why dissemble it ? Pretorian, his guilt is manifest—come, lean upon this altar, and tell me all.—The torch, Ventidius, that lighted up that conflagration was snatched, in the frenzy of remorse, from one of the snake-haired furies, that, even in his ‘ golden palace,’ haunt the *matricide*.”

We are told by Tacitus, that Agrippina was assured by the magician she consulted, as to whether her son

* In one battle the British lost 80,000, the Romans only forty men. The rebellion was succeeded by a famine, and this with the devastations by fire and sword swept away immense multitudes. “ *Quodque nationum ambiguum aut adversum fuerat, igni atque ferro vastatur. Sed nihil æque, quam fames, affligebat serendis frugibus incuriosos, et omni ætate ad bellum versâ, dum nostros commeatus sibi destinant.*”—*Tacit. l. xiv. 38.*

† “ *Sæpè audivi Q. Maximum, et P. Scipionem, præterea civitatis nostræ præclaros viros, solitos dicere ; cum majorum imagines intuerentur, vehementissime accendi.*”—*Sallust, Bell. Jugurth.*

should obtain the throne, that if ever he did, it would cost her her life ;—“ *Occidat dum imperet!* ” was the reply of Agrippina—“ Let him be a matricide, provided I see him first an emperor.”*

To compass this aim, she waded through a dark and shameless career, crowned by the poisoning of Claudius, her own kinsman and husband ; but no sooner was Nero seated in the power thus procured, when, instead of gratitude, he began to show disrespect to his parent, and soon came to regard her with aversion. After dissembling her disappointment for some time, the spirit of Agrippina, stung by daily slights and indignities, broke forth at last into tremendous threats and denunciations. Even in the despot’s hearing, she vaunted, “ that Britannicus was now of an age to vindicate his hereditary and sacred right to that empire, which a young upstart knew how to exercise only to insult his parent.” The horrid crimes of which the recesses of that palace were conscious, she would not dissemble. She confessed, before the world, that through misplaced affection for a child, she had sought incestuous nuptials, and had helped the sorceress Locusta to cull the poison for her imperial husband ;† but thanks to the immortal gods and to her own instinctive foresight, in sparing her step-son, Britannicus, she had kept an instrument by which she could still chastise the ingratitude of her unnatural offspring. She obtested the infernal deities, and the indignant shades of all in whose blood she had imbrued her hands for love of Nero, that, with the injured heir of her Claudius—now alas ! no more—she would fly to the camp, “ from whence,” she cried, “ the daughter of Germanicus shall be heard with the respect due to thirty legions.”

Nero was alarmed by the menaces of one, with whose desperate determination he had good reason to be familiar ; and his alarm was increased by the near approach of the fourteenth birth-day of the young

* C. Tacit. Ann. l. xiv. 9.

† Ibid. l. xii. 66, et seq.

prince, for whom a rather trivial display of the old Julian spirit had recently acquired a wide-spread sympathy. It happened, during the Saturnalia, when all distinctions are levelled, that it fell to Nero, as they were playing forfeits after supper, to award the various modes of ransom. Accordingly, he enjoined to each of the others some pleasantry, but nothing humiliating or calculated to wound their feelings, until it came to the turn of Britannicus. The young prince was rudely ordered to rise from his couch, and to recite some verses standing in the middle of the banquet-hall ; for his persecutor thus hoped to exhibit him as a block-head, to the jeers and derision of the revellers, who, in their progress to intoxication, had just arrived at that stage where the wits are keenest. But, unabashed by his position, the royal youth commenced, in a clear and steady voice, to recite some verses about one who, in his boyhood, had been pushed from his throne, and, from the summit of human grandeur, degraded to a most abject state. The allegory could not be mistaken, or fail to excite strong feelings of compassion ; and the excitement and security of the nocturnal revel caused the murmurs in favour of the injured prince to be louder and more intelligible. Thus incited by discovering that his victim could feel indignation and excite sympathy, the tyrant's hatred required nothing beyond the threats held out by Agrippina to send it headlong upon a long premeditated design ; but craven-hearted as he was cruel, and not daring publicly to order his adoptive brother to be put to death, he set himself to devise some plan for making away with him by private treachery. Poison is fixed upon, and the preparation of it given in charge to Julius Pollio, tribune of a prætorian cohort, who lost no time in securing the services of a hag called Locusta, already branded for her diabolical practices, and become notorious for a dark catalogue of crimes. The first potion was administered by the very tutors of the unfortunate prince ; for the precaution had been long since taken, to remove from

around his person all who had any respect for fidelity or the sacred laws of conscience. Being either too weak, however, or too slow in its operation, this potion had no effect ; whereupon the tyrant, through impatience of delay, burst forth into threats against the officer, and orders the witch to be tortured ; because, forsooth, in their anxiety to prevent exposure, and to leave some loophole to escape from legal consequences, they had dared to put off, for a single instant, the deed which was to rid *him* of apprehension. Then it was, the trembling wretches promised to mix a draught, swift and infallible as the keenest poniard ; and, in a closet of the imperial bed-chamber, is concocted that drug, whose fatal rapidity in execution Locusta could attest, from a memory teeming with reminiscences of murder.

From the days of Augustus, it had been the usage of the palace, for the children of the imperial family, with the young nobles selected for their companions, to be served with viands, simple and suited to their tender age, at a separate table, but immediately under the eye of the emperor, in the state triclinium. It was thus the imperial orphan reclined upon that fatal night, under the malignant glance of his destroyer. The cup-bearer, who, according to prescriptive rite, was to taste beforehand whatever beverage he presented, having been apprised of the plot, (that poisoning might not be made palpable by the sudden and simultaneous death of two,) contrived to manage his office so adroitly as to receive no injury ; but Britannicus finding the draught intolerably hot, withdrew it from his lips, and, pouring it into water, drank off the entire with thirsting eagerness ; and, with effect so deadly and instantaneous did the virus do its work, that in one agonizing but abortive effort to cry for help, he gasped, quivered in every limb of his fair frame, and fell stone-dead.

The courtiers and attendants are thrown into consternation ; the novices disperse ; but the old familiars, long initiated in the intrigues of the Palatine, stir not a step, nor so much as change a muscle of the coun-

tenance, but look slily for the solution of this enigma, and the text of their own conduct, to the visage of the emperor. He, without even rising from his recumbent posture, and with an expression of feature altogether inhuman, observed, "that it was only one of the usual epileptic fits to which the young prince was subject, and that he would recover on being removed to the open air." But as for Agrippina, a sudden tremor, and the consternation of an instant, that flashed from under that marble serenity, beneath which she had long learned to entomb her most hideous passions, betrayed that she was as ignorant of this affair as poor Octavia, the prince's sister. If Agrippina staggered, it was because, in Britannicus, the chief prop of her revenge was struck from under her, and because, in the dead body of the hapless prince, she read the omens of her own doom ; but, in another second, she was as composed as the lioness of bronze on which she leant. Even from the virgin cheek of young Octavia the hue of candour had been blasted by that atmosphere of dissimulation and enormity, which had rotted every feeling of tenderness and sisterly affection in her dreary heart : so, after a transient pause, the mirth and gaiety of the banquet was resumed, and waxed louder and more jocund than before.

The fire that consumed the corse of Britannicus glared out upon the dark hour of his murder ; for, while this poor victim was being escorted to the triclinium, and attended at the banquet with imperial pageantry and obsequious ceremonial, they were constructing his funeral pile, and mustering the satellites, who were to transport his injured ashes to the tomb. However, they were permitted to repose among the urns of his mighty ancestors, on the Campus Martius ; and such torrents fell during the hurried and truncated rites, that the populace took it for a sign of Divine indignation.*

The intrigues and reciprocal provocations, which

* Another circumstance, mentioned by Tacitus, in aggravation of Nero's guilt in this murder, is intentionally omitted.

naturally ensued from this beginning of hostilities, precipitated the execution of Nero's resolve to take away his mother's life. "After pondering for a long time," says the historian, "whether the bowl or the brand should be employed for this purpose, he determined at length to poison her; but, then, if any thing were to happen to Agrippina during the banquet, after the affair of Britannicus, it could not be easily passed off as an accident; besides, it was a critical thing to tamper with the attendants of a woman whose consciousness of the dark plots she harboured against others kept her eternally on the alert against surprise and treachery; and, in fact, the impression was universal among the palatines, that such was the queen-mother's skill in antidotes, that she could baffle the skill even of Locusta. It would be difficult to hide the effects of stabbing or any such violent operation, and moreover it was thought possible that the centurions might refuse to slay the emperor's mother even at his own bidding.*

The genius of Anicetus, commandant of the fleet at Misenum, who had been a slave, and had an old account to settle with his imperial mistress, came to relieve from this perplexity the emperor, who had been under his tuition, previous to Seneca's appointment. "A state-galley," he said, "could be so constructed as to go to pieces at a given signal. The sea," pursued the freedman, "is the native element of accidents, and where is the traitor who shall dare to harbour suspicion against Cæsar, while the winds and waves can be impeached? Temples and votive altars, with a magnificent apotheosis to the deceased empress, will not only stifle every sinister report, but add to the other imperial titles that of filial piety."†

* "Ferrum et cædes quonam modo occultaretur, nemo reperiebat; et, ne quis, illi tanto facinori delectus, jussa sperneret, metuebat."—*Tacit.* l. xiv. 3.

† "Nihil tam capax fortuitorum, quam mare; et, si naufragio intercepta sit, quem adeo iniquum, ut sceleri assignet, quod venti et fluctus deliquerint? Additum principem *defunctæ templum et aras*, et cætera ostendandæ pietatis. Placuit solertia," &c.—*Ibid.*

The ingenious villany caught Nero's fancy—the juncture, too, was propitious, as he was then engaged in celebrating the festivities of the Quinquatrus at Baiæ. The overtures to the plot were commenced forthwith. It seemed to repent the youthful emperor of his past errors. The forbearance due to a parent—even though subject to sallies of temper—the sacrifices which a son is bound to make, in order to soothe and soften all untoward irritation; with a thousand other dutious and amiable reflections—were never out of Nero's mouth, until, re-echoed by the courtiers in every direction, the rumour of reconciliation was effectually got up. The decoy succeeded; and, being aided by that strong passion for sights and pageantry, so natural in the sex, allured Agrippina to her fate. With the well-feigned impatience of filial fondness, Nero expected her arrival on the shore at Cuma, (for she had taken the precaution to come by sea from Antium;) and when they met, the tenderness of his embrace, and the hearty pressure of his hand in hers, convinced the unhappy mother, that, after all, her Nero loved her.* From Cuma, the joyful party proceeded to the imperial villa, at the other verge of the neck of land, (ad Baulos,) looking out over the bay of Naples; but it had been preconcerted that the imperial banquet was to take place in the palace at Baiæ, that the deed might be accomplished under the cloak of darkness, when Agrippina would be returning to her own villa on the Lucrine lake. One stately barge, conspicuous for its gala and brilliant decorations amongst all the gay fleet, that was in readiness to convey them from the villa near the Misenian promontory to Baiæ, seemed to invite the empress, who was fond of being rowed in gallant style, to step on board. But, whether it was that she had a hint from some one, or that the galley looked too obsequious and smiling

*—"Venientem dehinc, obvius in litora (nam Antio adventabat), excipit manu et complexu, ducitque Baulos. Id villæ nomen est, quæ, promontorium Misenum inter et Baianum lacum, flexo mari alluitur."—*Tacit.* l. xiv. 4.

to be trusted, Agrippina preferred to be carried to Baiæ by her own people and on terra firma. But the blandishments of the festive board at length dissipated every apprehension. Her reception—the caresses—the testimonies of confidence and of endearing playfulness she had met with—quite disarmed suspicion.* In this tumult of feeling and mutual converse, these hours, sacred to reconciliation, seemed to pass unheeded, and the feast was protracted till far in the night. The hour of separation came, but Nero is not satisfied with embracing his parent once, he flies after her through the brilliant saloons and corridors, to repeat his adieu; he seems to cling to her bosom, and can hardly tear himself away—whether it was, that these were the finishing strokes of a master in the arts of dissimulation, or that the last sight of her who bore him, as she was on her way to death, exercised some mysterious influence even over his savage nature.

The heavens shone with the placid lustre of the stars that glassed themselves in the fathomless serenity of the deep—all nature was at peace—and it would seem as if the gods had ordered every thing to discountenance and expose the plot.† Agrippina was accompanied by only two of her own attendants. Crepereius Gallus stood in waiting near the stern post, and, at the feet of her imperial mistress, reclining under a stately canopy, sat Accerronia, prattling, with all delight imaginable, about the emperor's repentance, ascendancy at court regained, when,—at the appointed signal, down comes the deck, (overlaid with an immense weight of lead,) and Crepereius is instantly crushed to death. Agrippina and her attendant owed their lives to the accident by which

* “Ibi blandimentum sublevavit metum; comiter excepta, superque ipsum collocata. Nam pluribus sermonibus, modo familiaritate juvenili Nero, et rursus adductus, quasi seria consociaret, tracto in longum convictu, prosequitur abeuntem, arctius oculis et pectori hærens, sive explendâ simulatione, seu perituræ matris supremus adspectus quamvis ferum animum retinebat.”—*Ibid.*

† “Noctem sideribus illustrem, et placido mari quietam, quasi convincendum ad scelus, dii præbuere.”—Cap. 5.

the pillars of the canopy had been left of a sufficient strength not to give way under the crash ; nor did the barge, as was intended, go to pieces ; the crew having fallen into such confusion that the efforts of the accomplices were frustrated by the majority, who were not privy to the design. There seemed nothing for it, then, but to overset the boat, by running all to one side ; but this extempore manœuvre being ill executed, and some of the galliots running to the opposite side, the empress and her attendant were precipitated without violence into the water. The silly lady Acerronia was quickly despatched with oars, cutlasses, stones, or whatever came to hand ; for, thinking to secure assistance, she kept crying, “ I’m Agrippina ; help, help the mother of the emperor ! ” But Agrippina uttered not a syllable, thus evading being recognised. She got one wound upon the shoulder. By swimming, however, and afterwards in a fishing-boat that picked her up, she made her way to the Lucrine lake, and was carried to her own villa.

When she had leisure to reflect upon the whole tissue of occurrences, the motive of so many flattering invitations to come down to the festival at Baiæ—of so many caresses and marks of honour heaped upon her, became too obvious. How else account for it ? Shipwrecked ! not by a gale, or by striking on hidden rocks, but in smooth water, hard by the quay,—and that, too, by the deck falling down like a portcullis ! Next she weighed every incident connected with Acerronia’s death ; then, absorbed in thought, gazed at the Claudian blood trickling from her own wound—“ Yes, magician ! thy response was *not* a lie ; but to circumvent this traitor, we must dissemble all suspicion of his treachery.” Accordingly, the freedman Agerinus is despatched to apprise her Nero how, through the benignity of the gods, and her own good fortune, she had escaped a serious accident, and to beg that his alarm for her safety would not tempt him to venture out at so unseasonable an hour. That, indeed, it was only of quietude she stood in need. Then, with a

well-dissembled air of security, she applied herself to have the wound dressed, and to retrieve, by all possible appliances, her exhausted energies. However, in the prompt orders to have search made for Acerronia's will, and to have seals set upon her effects, there was no dissimulation whatsoever. “*Id tantum non per simulationem.*”

By this time, the news of the failure reached Nero, and, to mend the matter, that suspicion had begun to settle in the right quarter. He almost fell dead with fear ; and, shaking from head to foot, began to swear that his mother, swift as a tigress to revenge, would be in on them, like lightning.—“She'll arm the slaves, stir up the troops to mutiny ; or, off to Rome, with her tragic tale of shipwreck, her attendants massacred, her own wound, she'll so work upon the senate and the people ! What shall become of me ?” He knew not, for his life, if Burrus and Seneca, (whom he had summoned in haste,) could not advise something.

It is doubtful whether these ministers had been previously made aware of the plot ; but both were dead silent for a considerable time, either afraid to give an advice which they knew would be of no avail to prevent the horrid deed, or convinced that matters had come to such a pass, the doom of the emperor was sealed, unless the vengeance of his mother was forestalled. At length, Seneca, who used not to be so tardy, begins to look inquiringly at Burrus, asking earnestly and in an under tone, “whether it was an affair for the soldiers ?” That the attachment of the Praetorians to the imperial family regarded each and all its members without exception, and that they could not be induced to perpetrate an atrocity on the daughter of Germanicus, whose memory they adored, was the blunt reply of Burrus. “But it is to be presumed,” he added, “that Anicetus will *finish* what he has planned and promised.” Anicetus was ready, but begged to know how much he was to get. At the word, Nero, as if beside himself, protests that, from that hour, he shall look upon himself as indebted to

his faithful, trusty, Anicetus for his empire ; but to hasten, taking care to select men of despatch—men prompt, at a nod, to do their duty.

Upon this, Agrippina's messenger, Agerinus, being announced, Nero, on the instant, and without a hint from any one, extemporises another act of the tragedy ; and dropping a stiletto between the freedman's feet while he is delivering his message, cries out to the guards, ordering the wretch to be manacled as if seized in an attempt upon the prince's life—a villain sent by Agrippina, who no doubt would put an end to herself, on learning the miscarriage of her treason.

Mean time, the rumour runs, that Agrippina was drowning, her barge having been upset *by accident*. Down to the shore with every one that hears it ; some scramble out on the rocks—others throw themselves into the boats lying along the shore—others rush up to the neck in the sea—they stretch out their arms at full length, as if to give help—they raise cries of lamentation, call upon the gods ; and between shouts of inquiry and response, where all was ignorance and confusion, ten thousand echoes were kept busy in their ocean caves. The multitude that collected with torches, lanterns, and lights of all kinds, was immense ; and, finding that the empress had escaped, nothing will do but to go off in a body to present their congratulations, till the sight of troops advancing with drawn swords, dispersed them.

CHAPTER X.

“ Cubiculo modicum lumen inerat, et ancillarum una; magis ac magis anxia Agrippina, quod nemo a filio, et ne Agerinus quidem; aliam fere liture faciem nunc, solitudinem ac repentinorum strepitus et extremi mali indicia.”—*Tacit. l. xiv. 8.*

CLEOPATRA (*applying the asp.*)—“ Peace, peace!

Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep?”

Agrippina's Death-bed.

ANICETUS surrounded the villa with a strong guard, and having battered in the gates, seized every domestic he met, lest they should give the alarm. Arrived in the ante-chamber, he found a few officers of the household at their post, all the rest having fled on hearing the tumult in the outer courts. One solitary lamp cast a dim and melancholy gleam around the closet of Agrippina, and one solitary handmaid watched beside her bed. The moments of suspense lagged drearily, and each added to the load of anxiety that pressed heavily on her heart,—no messenger from her son—no sign even of Agerinus. “ Child, what mean the lights and clamour along shore?”—“ All silent as the grave, again!”—Then heavy strokes, followed by a crash and tumult, confused at first, and presently, in the ante-room, the sound of flying feet, and harsh struggles against her very chamber door.—“ And thou, also, slave, dost thou forsake thy empress, like the rest!” But as she turned to rebuke the handmaid gliding away, her eye rested on Anicetus, standing between Herculeus, captain of a three-benched galley, and a centurion of marines, named Oloarites.—“ If to inquire for my health, Sir, say to thy emperor that my wound is doing well; if bent on outrage, presume not to say that you have orders; I will not believe my son a matricide.” But Herculeus

and Oloarites were already waiting the signal on either side the couch. The galley captain struck first—a grievous stroke, on the head, with a club ; and, while the centurion was brandishing his weapon, she raised her body, crying with her dying breath, “ *Ventrem feri !* ” (that vengeance might light upon the womb that had borne such a monster.)

One of Nero’s objects in compassing his mother’s death, was to remove an obstacle to his union with Sabina Poppea, “ a dame,” says the historian, “ adorned with every charm except virtue.” From an illustrious mother, who surpassed in loveliness all the women of her day, she inherited fame along with beauty ; her fortune was commensurate with the proud nobility of her lineage ; the exquisite elegance of her conversation was enlivened by a wit not at all contemptible ; and she had the art to veil her excesses under the most enchanting air of modesty.* But in Octavia, his betrothed and much-injured spouse, there was a barrier still to be got rid of.

Every infamous and cruel artifice ; bribery, threats, torture, were first resorted to, to blast the reputation of Octavia. But every effort having proved abortive to fix a stain upon her honour, and thereby justify her divorce and death, it was natural for Nero to resort once more to the murderer of his mother ; who, from being a favourite after the bloody night, for awhile, had not only fallen into disgrace, but had become insupportable and detested, as if the sight of him incessantly upbraided the matricide with his guilt.†

* “ *Huic mulieri cuncta alia fuère, præter honestem animum ; quippe mater ejus, ætatis suæ feminas pulchritudine supergressa, gloriæ pariter et formam dederat : opes claretudine generis sufficiebant ; sermo comis, nec absurdum ingenium ; modestiam præferre, et lasciviâ uti. Rarus in publicum egressus, idque velatâ parte oris, ne satiaret adspectum, vel quia sic decebat. Famæ nunquam pepercit, maritos ac adulteros non distinguens, neque affectui suo, aut alieno obnoxia ; unde utilitas ostenderetur, illuc libidinem transferebat.* ”—*Tacit.* l. xiii. 45.

† “ *Quia malorum facinorum ministri, quasi exprobrantes, adspiciuntur.* ”—*L.* xiv. 62.

Anicetus is sent for, accordingly, and reminded of his past performances. The only man to rid his prince of a mother plotting against her son's life, had it now in his power to perform a service not less grateful, that of relieving him of a wife whom he detested. No need of rough work on this occasion, but merely to proclaim himself paramour of the empress. Vast rewards—to be a secret till the affair had blown over—and a delightful retirement—the requital of compliance; of refusal—death. With an alacrity springing from his inborn baseness and the recklessness of the hacknied villain, Anicetus outstrips the most ardent longings of his employer, in his infamous declarations before the cabinet council, which the emperor had called together to receive his depositions.

Having paraded these atrocious slanders against his bride, in an imperial edict, he condemned her to close imprisonment in the island of Pandataria. Never did the sight of exile fill the spectators with deeper commiseration. Among the myriads who thronged the route by which they led her forth, there were old men, who recollect to have seen the spouse of Germanicus sent into banishment by Tiberius; the banishment of Julia by Claudius was still fresh in the public memory, but the full vigour of womanhood enabled *them* to bear up against misfortune; a portion, at least, of *their* existence had been joyful—present gloom was mitigated by the reflection of the gay and sunny past. But poor Octavia's wedding-day had been but the beginning of her obsequies. In crossing the bridal threshold she had entered a house of mourning, to see her imperial father carried off by poison; then her brother; put aside by her own handmaid, the policy of passing to other nuptials feigned to ruin her; and, bitterest of all, worse than a thousand deaths, her honour branded.

Even in the hands of a brutal and licentious soldiery, the forlorn Octavia seemed to cling to life; at least, though terrified to death by the doom which she anticipated, the poor young creature (she was still in

girlhood, scarce twenty,) could not make up her mind to die. After a few days' delay, seeing that she would not put an end to herself, the order came for her execution. Obttesting the gods that though widowed she was still a virgin,* and invoking the shades of her murdered kindred, and even Agrippina's lurid ghost for help, regardless of her shrieks they bind her limbs with fetters and open all her veins at once; and as terror congealed her blood so that it would not flow, she was suffocated in a vapour bath. This transaction was marked by another trait of cruelty still more revolting. The severed head was borne, as if in triumph, to the city, and Poppaea contemplated the traces of her rival's agony with complacency. Thanksgivings and offerings to the temples were decreed by the senate.† "This circumstance," says the historian, "we mention, once for all, that whoever seeks acquaintance with these times, either through our writings, or any other history, may take it for granted, that thanksgivings to the gods are voted by the conscript fathers, with the applause of the Roman people, as often as innocence is proscribed; or some atrocious murder ordered by the prince, and that for public disasters the same rejoicings take place, as, of old, for great enterprises crowned with success."

But what occurred on his first appearance in Rome after the murder of his mother, must not be passed unnoticed. For a long time he lingered in Campania, moving about from place to place, but shunning the beauteous shores of Baiæ, now become horrible and odious, as upbraiding the matricide with his guilt. How face the senate and the Roman people? Instead of acclamations, as of old, might he not expect to be

* "Jam viduam se et tantum sororem testaretur."—*Tacit.* l. xiv. 64.

† "Dona ob hæc templis decreta. Quod ad eum finem memoravimus, ut, quicunque casus temporum illorum, nobis vel aliis auctoribus, noscent, præsumptum habeant, quoties fugas et cædes jussit princeps, toties grates deis actas; quæque rerum secundarum olim, tum publicæ cladis insignia fuisse."—*Ibid.*

saluted with outbursts of opprobrium and execration ? But the minions of his court smiled at such groundless apprehensions. They knew Rome better, and they could assure his majesty that what had happened, instead of impairing would but enhance his popularity. Let him only put on a bold front, and see if the whole city, all orders and degrees, would not be ready to adore him. They only beg permission to go and prepare for his triumphal return. Miscreants, and dead to honour as they were, these panders to a blood-polluted monster had actually underrated the baseness of which Rome was capable.* The plebs, according to their tribes, and proud of the toga, turned out in procession—the senate and patrician order in the full blaze of their magnificence—the Roman matrons, leading their daughters—the patrician youthhood, disposed according to their sex and tender age, in companies, with branches and flowers, to shower from the platforms, and from each balcony, and crowded parapet, along his triumphant way. Elated with his victory over the honour of his country, and amidst the peans of an empire's servility, the matricide ascends the capitol, to return thanks to the immortal gods ; and then, with a frenzy, which proved how much he had been restrained by awe of Agrippina, rushed headlong into every debauchery, and filled not only the palace, but the whole city, with abominable excesses, which have, unfortunately, found a place in history.

* “ *Iret intrepidus, et venerationem sui coram experiretur ; simul prægredi exposcunt ; et promtiora, quam promiserant, inveniunt ; obvias tribus ; festo cultu senatum ; conjugum ac libero-rum agmina, per sexum et ætatem disposita ; extractos, quâ incederet, spectaculorum gradus, quo modo triumphi visuntur. Hinc superbus, ac publici servitii victor, capitolium adiit, grates ex-solvit ; seque in omnes libidines effudit, quas male coërcitas qualis-cunque matris reverentia tardaverat.* ”—*Tacit. l. xiv. 13.*

CHAPTER XI.

“ In the tenth year of the reign of Nero, the capital of the empire was afflicted by a fire which raged beyond the memory or example of former ages. The monuments of Grecian art and of Roman virtue—the trophies of the Punic and Gallic wars—the most *holy* temples, and the most splendid palaces—were involved in one common destruction. Of the fourteen regions, or quarters, into which Rome was divided, four only subsisted entire; three were levelled with the ground; and the remaining seven, which had experienced the fury of the flames, displayed a melancholy prospect of ruin and desolation.”—*Gibbon, Hist. of the Decl. and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. xvi.

Nero burns Rome.

BESIDES the insane delight which Nero seemed to derive from the perpetration of shameful crimes, and of such as made millions sensible of his tyranny, it has been alleged by his contemporaries, that he was instigated to have the city consumed by fire, in order to clear the ground for his golden palace, (which surpassed in vastness, elegance, and splendour, every other structure of the kind that had ever been attempted,*) and that his name might be immortalized by being given to the new city, which speedily arose from its ashes in such guise as to eclipse the city of marble of which Augustus boasted.†

* “ Cæterum Nero usus est patriæ ruinis, extruxitque domum, in quâ haud perinde gemmæ et aurum miraculo essent, *solita pridem et luxu vulgata*, quam arva et stagna, et in modum solitudinum hinc silvæ, inde aperta spatia et prospectus; magistris et machinatoribus Severo et Celere.—Videbaturque Nero condendæ urbis novæ et cognomento suo, appellandæ gloriā quærere.”—*Tacit. l. xv. 41, 42.*

† “ But some were of opinion that regulating the width and disposition of the streets, and height of the houses, by lessening the shade, did not conduce to the health of the inhabitants.”—*Ibid.*

The Fire.

—“Prithee, where did it begin, Ventidius?”

“In the far end of the Great Circus, contiguous to the Palatine and Cælian mounts.* The fire broke out with fury that proved indomitable from the first; for it was pampered into instantaneous violence by the combustible materials of the taverns and stores abounding in that quarter. Along the Circus, from goal to goal, it sweeps with the rapidity of the wind; from the lower ground, the wide-wasting element mounts the heights, and again rushes down over the adjacent valleys, with a swiftness not to be retarded by any human efforts. The character of the old town—a labyrinth of tortuous and narrow streets, encumbered with enormous piles of building that swarmed with inhabitants to the very tiles—contributed to accelerate the catastrophe, and augment its horrors.* Add to this, the terror-shrieks of women—the touching spectacle of languid age and feeble childhood, making abortive efforts to escape—some, deaf to the cries of nature and of duty, think only to save themselves; others freely risking their own lives to save their friends or kindred, or the darling objects of their affections. Midst the ruin of tumbling edifices, that come down upon them like avalanches of fire, the fugitives are crushed, with the sick and helpless they are dragging away on litters, or on their shoulders; some linger in distraction about their flaming dwellings, others take to flight, and all contribute to heighten the confusion and preclude the possibility of escape; or if a few, more fortunate than the rest, succeed in extricating themselves from the surrounding flames, they find to their consternation that parts where

* “Initium in eâ porte circi ortum, quæ Palatino Cælioque montibus contigua est.”—*Tacit.* l. xv. 38. There was a station or guard-house of the prætorians just there, so that the locality was in every respect well selected.

† “Urbe arctis itineribus hueque et illuc flexis, atque enoribus vicis, qualis vetus Roma fuit.”—*Ibid.*

they expected shelter are involved in the common ruin. At last, bewildered as to where or from whence to fly, they choke up the streets in helpless masses, or cast themselves on the earth in despair; while some, who actually made good their retreat, on contemplating the misery to which they are so suddenly reduced, rush back with the same eagerness upon destruction that others seek to shun it. As to endeavours to check the conflagration, there were none whatever; for, desperate gangs, denouncing every such attempt, roamed through the burning town in all directions, and tossed flaming brands to spread the fire, vociferating that they knew upon what authority they acted.”*

The parties, who had welcomed Nero with unbounded acclamation, when returning from the murder of his mother, and were ready to deify him for atrocities of which others were the victims, fell into different sentiments when the effects of his destructive caprice came home to themselves. The tyrant began to be alarmed at the public indignation. Nothing was left undone to stifle the complaints and discontent of the sufferers—every resource of state jugglery was tried—Nero would fain throw the blame upon the gods—ordered sacrifices to appease their ire—had the Sybilline books consulted; and, by their direction, supplications are made to Vulcan, Ceres, and Proserpine, besides a lectisternium, in which the Roman matrons endeavoured, first upon the Capitol, then on the sea-shore at Ostia, to turn aside the wrath of Juno from the city. But all to no purpose. Neither treasures squandered among the multitude, nor the improvement as to the regularity, superior elegance, and security of the new city—not even the wiles of superstition—could beguile or blind the public resentment, or acquit the matricide of having ordered the firing of the city.

* “Nec quisquam defendere audebat, crebris multorum minis, restinguere prohibentium, et quia alii palam faces jaciebant, atque esse sibi auctorem vociferebantur; sive ut raptus licentius exercent, seu jussu.”—*Ubi supra.*

To divert the odium, which could not be suppressed, he resolved to supply it with fictitious criminals, upon which it might exhaust its fury.*

“ With this view,” continues the pagan historian, Tacitus, “ Nero inflicted the most exquisite tortures upon a herd of wretches, who, under the vulgar appellation of Christians, had already become objects of execration, by reason of their flagitious practices. They derived their name and origin from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, had suffered death, by the sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate. Checked for the moment, by this vigorous step, the baleful superstition burst forth again, spreading itself not only over Judea, the cradle of the calamity, but through Rome, also, the common cess-pool into which are discharged the villanies of the whole world, and where every form of superstition, no matter how profligate, can celebrate its mysteries with impunity. The first proceeding, then, in this device, was to seize upon some miscreants, who confessed themselves to be accomplices of the Christians.† On their information *an immense multitude* (multitudo ingens) were convicted; not indeed of setting fire to the city, but of being the enemies of the human race. They were put to the most cruel deaths; their torments were embittered by derision, and turned into sources of sport and merriment for Nero and the mob. They covered their bodies with the skins of wild beasts, that they might be worried and torn to pieces by dogs; they nailed them on crosses, made bonfires of their bodies, having smeared them all over with a mixture of lard and pitch, or fastened them in such a manner on pedestals, and in conspicuous places, that the flames issuing from them served to light up the imperial gardens, and to shed lustre on the games and public entertainments which

* “ Sed non ope humanâ, non largitionibus principis, aut deûm placamentis, decedebat infamia, quin jussum incendium crederetur.”
— *Ubi supra.*

† Like Anicetus when Octavia was to be got rid of.

were blended with the persecution of the Christians. Nero had ordered the imperial pleasure-grounds of the Vatican to be thrown open for this exhibition, which was set off with chariot races and other sports of the Circus, on the grandest scale. These games were also due to the munificence of the emperor, who appeared himself, dressed as a charioteer, by turns careering upon the course at furious speed, or mingling with the mob on foot. Loaded though they were with guilt," concludes the pagan slanderer, "and deserving to be made examples of, still this revolting mixture of levity and ferociousness, added to the reflection that they were victimized through the savage baseness of the despot, and not through solicitude for the public good, contributed to change abhorrence of these wretches into commiseration for their cruel fate."*

—“Like the hydra, this monstrous superstition drew energy from its wounds—there seems to be a strange fecundity in their blood—they are multiplied by being massacred. But, though we are in the calends of July, the ‘ides of March’ are come for them.”

“Unriddle this, Ventidius. What mean these Christian ‘ides of March?’”

“Why, Julius, that they are on the eve of being cut off. For when its heads are severed, even the hydra dies.”

“More enigmas! Pray speak the dialect of camps, good sir. I am no diviner, but, as you are aware, a rough spun legioner. What hydra heads are these?”

“The chief one, a Galilean. He is to be crucified on the old Acropolis, over the Jews’ quarter, beyond the Tiber; the other dies by the sword, for he claims the privileges of a Roman citizen.”

* “Unde, quanquam adversus sontes et novissima exempla meritos,” &c.—*Tacit.* l. xv. ch. 44.

“Blessed are you when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and, for my sake, speak all that is evil against you—*lying.*”—*St. Matt.* ch. v. ver. 11.

“ Of what mien and stature is this latter ? ”

“ Pale, in contour aquiline, and not inelegant. The tracery of thought, with a beard, ample, flowing, but not so snowy as his few remaining hairs, imparts to his appearance a venerable bearing, which the vigour and agility of his glance forbid us to put down entirely to the account of years. Little-headed, diminutive in person, he looks, withal, contemptible until he speaks ; but then, he seems as if inspired by a divinity. I have seen more graceful gesture, listened to periods more symphonious, to diction more elaborate than his—not that he appears undisciplined in the arts of oratory, or unimbued with letters—but, when his spirit kindles up, lip, forehead, eye, become resplendent—his words reverberate upon the mind like lightning ; and, as if actuated by omnipotence, ‘ beat down every altitude, and lead captive every understanding, in obedience to his Christ.’ ”

“ It must be Paul ! ”

“ Paul *is* his name. But how came he known to thee ? He is a Jew, if I remember well, of Tarsus.”

“ It is even so. Yet, nevertheless, I know him well, Vendidius ; nay, you will marvel more to learn, that I had friendship strict, and long companionship with this same Christian captive ; and sore do I lament his present destiny.”

“ Mehercule, but ‘tis passing strange ! And marvellous, no doubt, have been the casualties that made companions of an enthusiast Hebrew and a Praetorian officer. Come, Julius, narrate me this passage of your life. It piques my curiosity to learn it ; and I see by the shadow of that tall wizard-stone of Egypt, that one-third of the watch is yet to run.”

CHAPTER XII.

The Centurion's Story.

“ It was as he stood—his chain-bound arms uplifted—making his defence before the king Agrippa, that I first saw this man.

“ Shortly after Portius Festus had taken possession of his government, Herod Agrippa, and Berenice, his queen, came down to visit him at Cæsarea ; and the governor received them with great pomp, and entertained them magnificently for many days. Among the rest, 'twas told by Festus to the king, who was a celebrated orator himself, how there was a man of amazing eloquence then a captive, whom the Jews had impeached before Felix of many crimes, but who, refusing to go up to Jerusalem to be judged, had, as a Roman citizen, appealed to Cæsar. ‘ Then,’ said Agrippa, ‘ I should like to hear this man myself.’ ‘ To-morrow,’ said Festus, ‘ your majesty shall hear him.’ So, next day, when the king and queen, conducted by the proconsul, with his tribunes and the leading men of the city, had come into the grand audience hall, with an immense concourse of all orders, at the command of Festus, Paul was led forth in chains ; and, when the governor had stated the charges against him to the king, Agrippa said to Paul—‘ Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.’

“ His statement was very singular. Born of Jewish parents, in Tarsus of Cilicia, it appears that, in his boyhood, he had been placed under Gamaliel, a chief rabbi in Jerusalem, at whose feet, to use the oriental phrase, he read the law ; and, from youth, according to that most rigid sect, had lived a Pharisee. Imbued with the prejudices of his party, young Saul became a zealot,

and, incited by the vehemence of his temperament, did many things against the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, whose name he deemed it a sacred and meritorious duty to detest and persecute. When the Nazarenes were condemned, he charged himself to see the sentence executed, and held the clothes of the executioners when they were stoned to death. Not satisfied with this, he pursued them with vengeance even into foreign cities.

“ ‘ Whereupon, when I was going to Damascus with authority and permission of the chief priests, at mid-day, O king,’ cried Paul, ‘ I beheld, as we were journeying, a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that were in company with me ; and when we were all fallen down on the ground, I heard a voice calling to me in the Hebrew tongue, “ Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ? It is hard for thee to kick against the goad.” And I said, “ Who art thou, Lord ? ” And he answered, “ I am Jesus whom thou dost persecute ; but rise up, and stand upon thy feet, for to this end have I appeared to thee, that I might make thee an apostle and a witness of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things wherein I will appear to thee,—delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, that they may be converted from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God ; that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a lot among the saints by belief in me.”

“ But as he spoke, or rather thundered forth the proofs of the resurrection, his being seemed dilated as if by the presence of a God. He looked, not like a culprit, but an emperor—an emperor of the heart and intellect, wielding an authority by which the haughtiest scorn was abashed, the most stubborn forced to bow. The whole basilica was subdued in this poor captive’s presence, and bound as if with a spell ; the king was half converted ; and even Festus, as if irritated by, and dreading the as-

saults that shook his iron mind, cried out, 'Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad!' And Paul replied, 'I am not mad, most noble Festus, but I speak the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, (the prophecies concerning the Messiah,) to whom on that account I speak with confidence; for I am persuaded that none of these things are unknown to him; for neither were any of these things done in a corner. Believest thou the prophets, king Agrippa? I know that thou dost believe them.' But how shall I repeat his arguments? Suffice it, that the king exclaimed, in hearing them: 'In a little time thou persuadest me to become a Christian!' 'I would to God,' said Paul, 'that in little and in much, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, should become such as I also am, except these bonds.' "

CHAPTER XIII.

“ Then, too, the scenes of pomp and joy, that make
One theatre of this vast peopled lake,
Where all that love, religion, commerce gives
Of life and motion, ever moves and lives.”

Moore's Alciphron.

“ Mare illud, quod nunc Favonio nascente, purpureum videtur,—
modo cœruleum videbatur, mane flavum ; quodque nunc, quia
a sole collucet, albescit, et vibrat, dissimileque est proximo ei
continenti.”—*Words of Cicero while looking on the Bay of
Naples. Acad. Quest. l. iv. 33.*

“ And when it was determined that Paul should sail into Italy, he,
with the other prisoners, was delivered to a centurion, named
Julius, of the band Augusta.”—*Acts of the Apostles, xxvii.*

“ THE last morning,” continued Julius, “ had not dawned upon our voyage, when I was already stationed on the prow to catch the first sight of long sighed-for Italy. Like a transparent veil upon a picture, or a fair group of Phidias, there extended a dim mist over shore and ocean ; but, when the jocund god of morn lifted it away, who shall conceive the vision that broke upon our senses ;—who that has not gazed, as we did then, in ecstasies, upon the bay and surrounding scenery of Neapolis ?

“ Argosies of merchant ships from Egypt, and Tyre, and Cyrene, and even from isles remote, and cities of great commerce, beyond the straits of Hercules, were interspersed along the wavy mirror of the deep, with martial gallies, glittering with shield and helmet. Warlike music came along the waters, the mellow horn and the timbrel chimed in with songs in many dialects, as the mariners spread their various coloured sails to catch the matin breeze, redolent of the orange groves and gardens of pleasure along the beauteous shores. Oh ! it was a sight entrancing ; and to sit

one down, like a circumspect geographer, to measure distances and note down bearings, while, in their first tumult, the senses could hardly believe the scene's reality, would have been to outrage every franchise of imagination. But when the noon-tide calm left the weary galliots to sleep along their decks, I leant over the ship's side, in the shadow of the lofty rigging ; and, while Paul and his disciple recited their alternate prayer, I rehearsed the scenery at leisure, perused it, line by line, and felt my delight increase the more I ruminated on the lore of history, and recalled the fantasies with which inspired genius has embellished its indigenous traditions. Rude, at the best, must be the etchings of a hand inured only to the sanguinary implements of war ; and besides, since then, the impressions of that bland reverie have been swept over by some turbulent and deformed years. Nevertheless, since it so touches your curiosity to hear a centurion's recollections of these far-famed regions, let Hercules try the distaff.

“ The bay of Neapolis is, in some sort, of a goblet form ; hence the Greeks called it *crater* ; but of its rim, the only fragments that remain towards the ocean, are the isles of Caprea, Inarime, and Prochyta. This circular form of the bay—its very name—besides a variety of evidences, far less equivocal, upon the border regions, and more than all, perhaps, the aboriginal traditions, leave but little room to doubt, that this huge basin was, in times long past, the basis of another Etna. Stained with sulphureous eruptions, thunder scathed, and interspersed with mephitic pools, and sources of boiling streams, the *campi phlegræi*, or burning fields, are fertile in tokens favourable to this conjecture. The heights above Dicæarchia, or Puteolum, where we landed, are called ‘ the assembly rooms of Vulcan, (Hephesti agora;) and terrible must have been the volcano's fury, wide spread the havoc of its eruptions, since in their effects the terrified imagination has beheld the havoc of the war between the Titans and the gods. Deranged by the

shock of the catastrophe, memory still points to the field of battle, where the giants were overthrown by thunderbolts. Probably the simple truth is this, the bowels and substance of the burning mountain having been, in the long run, consumed and cast abroad by the intestine war of elements, like a state exhausted of its strength, it sunk into the abyss beneath ; while the adjacent sea, long vexed by its flaming volleys, rushed in through the broken frontier, acquiring for Neptune the fairest province ever added to his domain. Assuming this hypothesis, the captive drew from it a beautiful allegory of the converted sinner ; saying, that the halcyon flood before us, reflecting heaven as it did, could give but a shadowy and inadequate idea of the soul's serenity, in which grace has quenched the old volcano of iniquity, inundating the heart, where nought but the war and uproar of the passions used to dwell, with that peace of God which surpasseth all comprehension.

“ To one sailing in from the Tyrrhenean Sea, the continent begins on the left, by the high promontory of Misenum, the chief station appointed by Augustus for the fleet. Here Lucullus had a villa. Next you come to the imperial villa, (ad Baulos,) to which you described the monster as leading the unfortunate Agrippina, in the first instance, before they proceeded on to Baiæ, not far within the bay. This elysium of Epicurus displays its voluptuous charms along a recess of the shore, sheltered by a back ground of hills, dotted with parian shrines of dalliance, peeping from acacia groves and trellised vines, up to the very ridges, crowned with many a temple and marble pharos. The causeway of Caius stretches from thence across the sea to Dicæarchia, upon innumerable arches ; and all along the bend of the shore which it subtends, the headlands and slopes are scattered with piles of architecture, which prove to the beholder, that there was grandeur even in the relaxations of the heroes and statesmen who erected them. The summer retreats of Pompey and Cæsar, of Hortensius

and Marcus Tullius, are all in the same vicinity, those of Catulus and Varro, at no great distance towards the Cuman shore. On the little isle of Nisida, further on towards Neapolis, stands that of Brutus. It was there the patriots, as they called themselves, assembled for the last time ; and its marble recesses were conscious of their irresolution and gloomy presentiments, before they dispersed, abandoning the field to the profligate but stirring Antony.

“ It is in vogue to say that Cato slew himself at the conclusion of the first act ; and that had he reserved himself, the advantages so dearly purchased by the death of Cæsar would not have been thrown away for want of energy. True it is, the leaders seem to have lost all decision from the moment they struck the first blow ; as if confounded at the magnitude of their own achievement. They slunk away like thieves detected in a petty larceny, instead of rushing, with their reeking daggers, to the Forum, to proclaim the usurper’s death ; they treated with Antony, when they should have set a price upon his head. It may be, too, that Cato would have striven to save the republic for its own sake, while Cicero would do so that he might boast of it ; but, nevertheless, it was not through any faltering of the conspirators, or through the pusillanimity of Marcus Tullius, that liberty was not restored. Patriotism and the love of independence had long expired among the people, who had learned, especially since the times of Sylla, to regard the contests of the oligarchy, among themselves, with the same eye they cast upon a horse race or a fight of gladiators. It mattered nought to them which faction triumphed ; they cared not for the country, because they had long ceased to have any interest in it. It was long, in fact, since the Roman populace had ceased to have a country at all ; for, from the time that Roman citizenship ceased to designate a people having the same altars, the same sepulchres, walls, and ancestral recollections—that is, from the time the Latin tribes, and almost all Italy,

had been made Roman citizens, the name became a legal fiction. The licentious millions, feasted and entertained with circus shows, with wild beast baiting, and wholesale murder, at the expense of the provinces, were far from being, like the ancient 'gens,' the moving power in the state. Hence the carefully polished harangue of Brutus was listened to by the throng about the rostrum, as if it were the address of a tragic actor, in which the audience had no concern whatever beyond applauding the sentiment or diction, or to hoot and hiss, according to its caprice. Had they agitated, in the first place,—instructing the people in their rights, and in their wrongs, and rousing them from the fatal listlessness, about the commonweal, engendered by long misgovernment and oppression,—then, might the death of Cæsar have been followed by such another outburst of patriotic indignation as swept the Tarquins from the throne. But, circumstanced as Rome was at that juncture, the attempt of Brutus was a mere tragic exhibition, for which not the managers alone, which might be borne with resignation, but the most distant and unoffending nations paid a fearful price of blood and treasure.

"But in the heyday of the nobles, when Pompey was fortune's favourite, and while the eloquence of Cicero swayed the senate and the assemblies of the people, it was usual for the greatest conquerors and statesmen to pass the vacations from the curia and the camp in philosophic intercourse—speculating as to whether a wise man can be unhappy—whether death, or pain, be an evil—whether there exist either gods, or a future world, or a providence—whether any thing be certain—with many other themes treated of by Plato and the other Greeks. Such studies had formed the chief pastime of the greatest spirits of the patrician order, since the time of Lælius and the elder Scipio, who cultivated the friendship of Ennius and the captive Greek Polybius, and were *accused* of being concerned in certain dramatic compositions, put forth under the name of a Carthaginian slave,

called Terence ; and of even leading about with them poets and philosophers during their campaigns. In the town and in their country houses, the Scipios, Metellus, the Claudii, and others, formed a court around themselves ; and while all the old brutality and ignorance of the plebeians was not only kept up, but fostered with all diligence, especially by the stern Cato and his school, the nobility became highly accomplished ; and, through their manner of life and familiarity with the Greek parasites who were attracted round them, their tone and tastes became refined in the same degree as the people retrograded.

“ Most of Cicero’s philosophic works are, very probably, what they pretend to be, at least, in a great measure—the great orator’s reports or recollections of conferences actually occurring between himself and his contemporaries. One time, the scene lies in Tusculum, another time at Tibur, or at Arpinum, under the shade of ancestral trees, and beside the cool stream. He boasted that the genius of philosophy did not forsake him even amid the wranglings of the bar ; what wonder, then, to find, that when he visited the shores of Cuma and Parthenope, so propitious to meditation, her serene form was ever at his side ?

“ ‘ When Atticus was lately staying with me, in the Cuman villa,’ says Cicero, ‘ we received a message from Varro, that he had come down from Rome the evening before, and, but for his fatigue, would have called on us immediately. We thought there was no time to be lost, on hearing this, but that we should, forthwith, proceed to visit one so long associated with us by friendship and by studies, equally cultivated and cherished by all three. Wherefore, we set out at once for his villa, but, at a little distance from it, we see him coming to meet us.’ The friends embrace, according to custom, and on entering the villa, they quickly turn, from the news of the day, to the philosophic themes that form the first book of the Academic Questions. The fourth book is also a conversation supposed to take place

at Bauli, (ad Baulos,*) in a xystus or terrace of the villa of Hortensius, as Lucullus and Cicero, who have been on a visit with Catulus in his Cuman villa, are waiting for a sea breeze, Lucullus being to sail to his villa near Neapolis, Cicero to his at Pompeii. The beauteous scenery by which they were surrounded is pressed into the service of the academic theories, by the ingenuity of Cicero. ‘ And as for this much boasted gift of vision,’ he says, ‘ how exceedingly limited and imperfect is it ? It is true, I can discern, from where we are, the villa and pleasure grounds of Catulus at Cuma, but my own villa at Pompeii, I cannot see ; not that any obstacle intervenes, but the feeble ken is not able to carry that distance. And oh, what a glorious prospect is that before us ! Puteoli is in full view, but our friend Avianus is not visible, though, perhaps, he is at this moment walking in the portico of Neptune. To this deity, then, of yours, of whom you boast, I will say, frankly, that, with such eyes, I am not content. Sharper they may be than those of the fishes disporting, no doubt, in the azure waters there before us, though not seen by us, as we are invisible to them ; for their atmosphere is duller even than our own.’†

* “ Quibus de rebus et alias sœpe nobis multa quæsita et disputata sunt, et quondam in Hortensii villa, quæ est ad Baulos, cum eò Catulus, et Lucullus, nosque ipsi postridie venissemus, quam apud Catulum fuissemus. Quo quidem etiam maturius venimus, quod erat constitutum, si ventus esset, Lucullo in Neapolitanum, mihi in Pompeianum navigare.”—*Acad. Quæst.* 1. iv. 4.

† “ Ut enim vera videamus quam longe videmus ? Ego Catuli Cumanum ex hoc loco regionem video,—Pompeianum non cerno ; neque quidquam interjectum est, quod obest ; sed intendi longius acies non potest. O præclarum prospectum ! Puteolos videamus ; at familiarem nos Avianum fortasse in porticu Neptuni ambulantem non videamus. Responderem igitur audacter *isti vestro Deo* ; me plane his oculis non esse contentum. Dicet me acrius videre, quam ullos pisces fortasse ; qui neque videntur a nobis, et nunc quidem sub oculis sunt ; neque ipsi nos aspicere possunt. Ergo ut illis aqua, sic nobis aër crassus offunditur.”—*Acad. Quæst.* 1. iv. 25. This truly academic quibble carries with it its own refutation. Was not that sight which caused the academic to exclaim, “ O præclarum prospectum !” worth thanking heaven for ? Experience has taught

“ But to Virgil’s art, these regions are, if possible, more indebted than even to nature. From immemorial antiquity, they had been haunted by myths and phantoms the most gloomy and terrible. ‘ An impervious gloom,’ according to Homer, ‘ unenlivened by rising or setting sun, spread a thick eternal shade over the beach, where the dark and barren groves of the remorseless Proserpine marked the entrance to the regions of the dead.’* Here flowed Cocytus, here that dreaded stream from whose further shore no traveller returns—the dark jaws of Avernus, the fiery Phlegethon, the den of Cerberus ; and there, too, were the Elysian plains and Lethe, motionless as oblivion. Maro became the Orpheus of these uncouth and savage fictions. But, in reclaiming the wilderness, he did not destroy the charm of wildness ; he had the benign ingenuity to civilize without resorting to extermination. The sibyl was not evicted from her grotto ; he even let Cerberus alone—nay, made him useful. Prescription and vested interests were respected—the rill was left to flow, the pool to mantle as before—no ejectment, no clearing away of what might be regarded as sordid lumber ; but, seizing every natural advantage of myth and scenery, as they stood, his plastic genius obliged them to subserve the interests of his great epic, with art so exquisite as to shed the charm of reality over the most poetic fictions. Start from the shore of Cuma with the sixth book of the *Æneid* in your hand ; you can trace the Trojan hero, step by step, to the ‘ ivory gate’ from the sibyl’s cave, and are delighted, at every turn, to find, between the landscape and the text, the most astonishing coincidence.

‘ Tunc sylvæ, tunc antra loqui, tunc vivere fontes,
Tunc sacer horror aquis, adytisque effunditur echo
Clarior, et doctæ spirant præsagia rupes.’

the sceptic, even in this instance, that the eye, as formed by the Creator, can peruse what Cicero’s contemporaries believed to be a sealed book ; and can discern not only fishes in the sea, but myriads of living creatures in every drop of water.

* Pompeiana, vol. i. p. 42.

The tomb where they placed his ashes is diminutive, and therefore suitable ; for little, indeed, of Virgil belonged to earth. It stands by the wayside, as you go from Parthenope (where he expired) to Puteoli, in a shady recess, high up on the left, just at the entrance of that long mystic corridor (the grotto of Pozilippo) which, with its star-like issue and goblin shadows, forms a befitting vestibule to that land of initiation which lies beyond, the fairest province of the poet's empire.

“ From the bustle and uproar of Puteoli, a great emporium, we escape along a bold and rocky shore, and after doubling a bluff jutting of the land, discover the fair Parthenope, vestal-looking as Diana, while the snow-white villas stationed among the sylvan scenery, along the mountain side behind, might be likened to the Dryads keeping watch while their goddess sleeps beside the blue waters.

“ But if you commence the circuit on the right, as you are sailing into the *crater-bay*, the land begins at Cape Minerva, and is abrupt and hilly, on by Surrentum, until you come to Stabia, where the ridges subside into the smiling valley of the Sarnus ; having, on its right bank, the sport-loving little town of Pompeii, founded, by a Greek colony* of the Theloboi, or Taphians, a piratical people from the mouth of the Achelous, who extended their dominion over the surrounding shores, after having seized on Caprea, in the first instance.† It was to this delicious isle that Tiberius retired to spend the last years

* An idea has prevailed, that the sea once washed the walls of Pompeii ; but though it is said that rings have been found, to which it has been supposed vessels were anciently moored, close to the ruins, yet there seems great reason to believe, that the trade of Pompeii was carried on, as Strabo intimates, by means of the river Sarnus, which yet runs a clear, deep, and navigable river, approaching within a quarter of a mile of the site of the city ; the situation rendering it a convenient emporium of the commerce of the cities of Nola, Nuceria, and the produce of the fertile plain south of Vesuvius.—*Gell's Pompeiana*, vol. i. p. 3.

† *Pompeiana*, vol. i. p. 22, 23.

of his hateful existence in debauchery the most shocking, and in the dark practices of magic to which he was addicted.*

“ Three miles from Pompeii, as you go to Neapolis, there is another town of much greater importance, called Herculaneum, from its supposed founder. Commercial, populous, given to theatrical amusements and revelry, and highly adorned by Grecian art, it reposes on the water’s edge, immediately at the base of Mount Vesuvius, which rises above it, to a great height, exactly in the middle distance. This mountain is clad almost to the summit with pleasure gardens and vineyards, of which the produce is celebrated—a retreat for which the goddess of desire, and Bacchus with his satyrs are said to forsake their most favoured abodes.†

“ The mountain is in form a truncated cone, of an ashy appearance towards the top, which is broken into caverns with rocks, scattered here and there, that seem as if they had been eaten by fire; and there is a tradition of its having burnt in times long gone by.‡ It was on its sunny slopes that Decius,

* “ At Cæsar, dedicatis per Campaniam templis, quanquam edicto monuisset, ne quis quietem ejus irrumperet, concursusque appidanorum, disposito milite, prohiberentur; perosus tamen municipia et colonias, omniaque in continentis sita, Capreas se in insulam abdidit, trium millium fretu ab extremis Surrentini promontorii dijunctam. Solitudinem ejus placuisse maxime crediderim, quoniam importuosum circa mare, et vix modicis navigiis pauca subsidia; neque appulerit quisquam, nisi gnaro custode. Cœli temperies hieme mitis, objectu montis, quo sæva ventorum arecentur; æstas in Favonium obversa, et aperto circum pelago peramæna; prospectabatque *pulcherrimum sinum*, antequam Vesuvius mons ardescens faciem loci verteret. Grecos ea tenuisse, Capreasque Telebois habitatas, fama tradit. Sed tum Tiberius duodecim villarum nominibus et molibus insederat; quanto intentus olim publicas ad curas, itanto occultos in luxus et malum otium resolutus.”—*Tacitus*, l. iv. 67; *vid. etiam*, l. vi. 1, 20, 21.

† “ Hic est pampineis viridis Vesuvius umbris;
Presserat hic madidos nobilis uva locus
Hæc juga, quam Nysæ colles, plus Bacchus amavit,
Hoc nuper Satyri monte dedere choros.
Hac Veneris sede,” &c.—*Martial.*

‡ *Katà τοῦς ἀρχαῖους χρόνους.*—*Diodor. Sicul.*

having devoted himself with terrific auguries to the infernal gods, rushed with ruin and consternation on the Latin ranks ; winning, by his death, a decisive victory for Rome, and, for himself, a deathless renown. Here, also, it was that Spartacus, on escaping with his fellow-captives from the gladiatorial schools at Capua, took refuge, where he was speedily joined by some thousands. They were soon besieged by the troops who blocked up the only pass that led to their wild fortress, which was as if walled round by precipices and overhanging rocks, upon which there grew great store of wild vines. Of these the bondmen cut the strongest tendrils, and made thereof ladders like ship ladders, strong, and of such length that they reached from the top to the bottom of the precipice. Upon these, they got safely down, and also their arms ; then winding round the hill, they fell upon the troops with such fury, that they fled, and their camp was taken.*

“ In fact, the hill has a ruffianly aspect, somehow or other, even to the present day. It looks like a gay dressed brigand chief, peering out over the wide Elysian landscape ; serene, while terrific passions ferment within, and smiling with hellish complacency over anticipated devastation. Sorcerers and witches are said to haunt the gorges and mephitic caverns round its summit ; and, during the noon-tide repose, the vine-dresser has often heard wild snatches of their mirth, and imagined that he felt the mountain groan and shake as if from the doings within its bowels. Phantoms, too, have frequently appeared running to and fro, with baleful torches. Fictions, perhaps, either feigned or fancied by a mercurial peasantry, and by the fishermen and superstitious mariners, who keep watch by night on the adjacent waters ; but, however this may be, certain it is, the surrounding regions and the borders of this mountain, in particular, display the loveliest

* Plutarch, in vit. Crass. ; Appian. Bel. Cir. i. ; Florus, iii. 20.

scenery—the garden even of Ausonia, where nature wears perennially a gala dress. The climate is as unrivalled for mildness as the soil is for fertility ; twice a year these happy plains are visited by spring with all her blossoms. Bright summer usurps the rest ; so that winter is as perpetually excluded from this heaven upon earth as Saturn from Olympus.

‘ *Hic ver assiduum, atque alienis mensibus æstas.*’

“ Nevertheless, it is not till day begins to die in paroxisms of beauty, that this bay and its enchanting borders assume their characteristic charm. It is not coast, or lake, or mountain with temples by winding rivers, and castles rising above forest trees, or any combination of all these attributes, that constitutes a landscape beautiful. Ventidius, it is light that beautifies ; and, contrasted with the colours which streak and tint the scenery of Neapolis at evening time, even our Roman sunsets are dull and sordid as sackcloth compared with purple. Art, also, exquisite Pelasgic art, has heightened every blandishment of nature ; and, while devising a thousand fresh incentives for the passions, not only palliates, but makes a religion of their indulgence. Their groves, their gardens, their public and private structures, are graced with the most charming and diversified productions ; but Cupid is the hero of nearly all ; for, as with us, it was state policy erected temples, so it was sensuality that would seem to have erected them in Greece. Conceptions, seldom vouchsafed to the most gifted in other climes, and never perfected but by pains-taking and perseverance, in these favoured regions start forth, without an effort, as Minerva is said to have sprung, full armed, from the head of Jove. The very utensils of most vulgar use, from this plastic genius, derive an epic interest.* Thus encountering

* Pompeii was but a small town, and in all probability contained no celebrated specimen of any artist of consequence ; yet, in it the hand of the artist is every where visible. The paintings are very frequently of history, but embrace every variety of subject, some of the most exquisite beauty ; while a general acquaintance with

none but forms of bewitching, poetic import. Life, to those sportive and voluptuous tribes, is like a holiday—one protracted trance of rapture, upon which no thought of the future, none of the grim realities of existence, are ever suffered to intrude.

“ Oh ! with what mingled rage and wonder, the roisterers of Pompeii and the other sojourns of dalliance did look and laugh at Paul—denouncing anathemas against the passions—calling upon all who would escape from wrath to come, to ‘ crucify the deeds of the flesh.’ Then, laying bare their depravities, which had become not only inbred, but so many tests of piety, he described to them in tones that held their spirits cowering and chained with dread, how God had rained down fire on Sodom and the Pentapolis, for similar excesses—cursing, with barrenness and fetid desolation and death, the sea, the shore, the very atmosphere of regions the most teeming and beautiful of all the land that ‘ flowed with milk and honey.’ Then, pointing to Vesuvius, at the base of which he stood, the captive proclaimed, with the vehemence of inspiration, that, if like Nineveh of old, they did not seek for mercy in seasonable repentance, the crisis was not distant, when a deluge of fire, and whirlwinds of red-hot ruin, would overwhelm them in their sins.

“ After seven days, in which my captive visited his brethren, who were in these parts, we retraced the steps of Horace, along the Via Appia ; and so came to Rome. His chain hung lightly on the captive while I remained ; and, before I was ordered off to Britain, I knew he would be shortly set at liberty.

“ Why do I dwell upon every trivial incident con-
the unrivalled taste of more ancient times is manifested in an ele-
gance demanding and receiving our admiration.—*Gell's Pompeiana*,
vol. ii. p. 154. Sir William's elegant work was published before
the discovery of the magnificent mosaic pavement, supposed to
represent the battle of the Cydnus between Alexander and Darius.
The house, too, in the triclinium of which it was found, is more
beautiful and rich, in marbles especially, than any described in the
“ Pompeiana.”

nected with one apparently so contemptible—a Jewish artizan—an enthusiast—an atheistic wretch, as you call him, already doomed ? Because, Ventidius, now that I reflect upon his career and conversation, I am astonished why, long ago, I have not been what I am now, and what I shall proclaim myself before the legions and the Roman people, ere the sun, which already streaks the summit of the Alban hills with argent light, shall set. Why, scales of impenetrable stupidity, thicker than those which once fell from his own eyes, or than this cuirass on my breast, must have hung upon my mental vision. How did I miss perceiving till this instant, when it comes upon me like a burst of sunlight, that his mission must be from God ?

“ It was evident, as we led him into Rome, that he came not as a culprit, but a conqueror. For thirty miles, his progress along the great Appian thoroughfare was a triumph. No *spolia opima* ever looked so proud, or won such admiration as the chains with which Paul was bound for Christ ; and we, the legioners of Rome, were but a guard of honour to conduct this envoy upon the errands of the Crucified ; as if Cæsar were a vassal, under penalty to provide for the transport and safe conduct, by sea and land, of those who preached his gospel. The very elements in their wildest rage respected him. When iron-hearted veterans lay paralysed with dread upon the deck, this feeble, scorned Christian stood forth amongst us, like a deity. ‘ Be of good cheer,’ he cried, ‘ for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but only of the ship. For an angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, stood by me to-night, saying, Fear not, Paul, thou *must* be brought before Cæsar ; and behold, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.’ Every tittle was verified as he predicted. I wave the proof, from his miracles, which we all beheld in Melita, that God is with him. His mere apostleship evinces that he is the accredited ambassador of the Divinity. Why should he leave an ancient and renowned profession, in which he was on

the high road to fortune, for a recent and persecuted sect ; the members of which would regard him with distrust, if not with aversion, on account of his past cruelties ; while, by his former associates and patrons, he was to be branded and pursued as an apostate ? If an impostor, or a dupe, how account for his successes ? of which not only the fame, but the effects have spread through every province of the empire and extended far beyond its frontiers ? ‘ We see him in the prosecution of his purpose, travelling from country to country, enduring every species of hardship, encountering every extremity of danger, assaulted by the populace, punished by the magistrates, scourged, beat, stoned, left for dead ; expecting wherever he came a renewal of the same treatment, and the same dangers ; yet when driven from one city, preaching in the next, spending his whole time in this employment, sacrificing to it his pleasures, his ease, his safety, persisting in his course to old age, unaltered by the experience of perverseness, ingratitude, prejudice, desertion, unsubdued by anxiety, want, labour, persecution, unwearied by long confinement, undismayed by the prospect of death. The question is, has imposture been ever found, is it possible to conceive it, sustaining a character like this ? Hypocrites and charlatans there have been, and are, in abundance ; but is an example to be met with, of a man voluntarily undertaking, for no earthly consideration, a life of want and pain, of incessant fatigue, of continual peril ; submitting to the loss of his home and country, to stripes and stoning, to tedious imprisonment, and the constant expectation of a violent death, for the sake of carrying about a story of what was false, and of what, if false, he must have known to be so ?’*

“ But why do I tarry here ? Already day is on us ; and a strange yearning to kiss the chains, to gaze upon the countenance, to hear the heaven-inspired

* See *Horæ Paulinæ*, of Paley, near the end.

voice of Paul, has seized me. Conduct me to him, good pretorian; and, as to the argument of my conversion, if you would know the sequel of it, mark well the words of him, who, stepping from the ranks to-day, shall, at the 'Salvian waters' lay down his military belt, and take his portion, no longer with the tools of a sceptred matricide and incendiary of his country, but with the champion of heaven's Emperor. Where have they imprisoned him?"

"Where many a vanquished enemy of Rome has got his guerdon*—where Cethagus and Lentulus were strangled—Jugurtha starved to death—where"—

"Enough! Lead on, to the Tullianum. But, hark! with what jubilee their voices, rising, from the lowest dungeon of the Mamertine, like matin fragrance to the skies, salute, with alternate hymns of praise, the day in which they are 'to be dissolved and be with Christ!'"

* So the well known passage in Cicero, *Verres*, Act. ii. v. 20, where he describes, and even approves of this atrocious practice:—
"Supplicia quæ debentur hostibus victis."

CHAPTER XIV.

"Lovely, and comely in their life, even in death they were not divided."—2nd Book of Samuel, i. 23.

"O felix Roma, quæ tantorum principum
Es purpurata precioso sanguine,
Non laude tua, sed ipsorum meritis,
Excellis omnem mundi pulchritudinem."

Elpis, uxor Boetii, in Hymn. de Apost.

BUT when the subsiding tumult evinced that the city, overpowered by surfeiting and drunkenness, had sunk into a delirious stupor, to be haunted with night-mare visions of the murders and debaucheries in which it had been rioting, there ventured forth under the azure gloom of night, a little band of disciples, who often paused to listen, or drew aside in trepidation under the deep shade of arch and portico, until at last they found themselves beyond the Tiber, on the highest ridge of the Janiculum. There the lifeless body of St. Peter still hung upon the cross, to which the persecutors had nailed his venerable hands and feet. Ah ! it was a piteous sight. The beard and the grey hairs of the venerable man were clotted with the gore, trickling down from the wounds by which he hung, and bedewing his limbs, emaciated with age and apostolic labours. His features were obliterated with blood and livid tumours, as if they had struck him heavily on the face ; and that frame, whose very shadow used to raise up the ulcerous cripple, and the plague-struck from their litters, had now "no soundness in it." Oh, how changed since that bright hour on Tabor, when he exclaimed, in ecstasy, "Lord, it is good for us to be here !" Dim, drowned in gore, was that eye which had grown familiar with the Incarnate Word ; the feet that Jesus washed, that had carried

the tidings of salvation round provinces and kingdoms, were torn with ghastly wounds ; transfixed to the hard wood was that hand which raised the paralytic in the portico called the “Beautiful,” and lifted Tabitha from the bier ; frozen the tongue that upbraided “the whole house of Israel” with deicide ; and launched forth the suggestions of the Paraclete in the midst of Jerusalem, with such potency, as to lay prostrate, in adoration of Jesus, myriads who had shouted, “Not him, but Barabbas !”

The Christians, Timotheus and his venerable parent being of the number, were heartbroken with grief at beholding him ; the very stars of heaven looked down as if they were afflicted, so pensive was the light they shed upon the martyred body and the group that gazed upon it with streaming eyes, their hands clasped, or lifted, in the excess of their tribulation. But no loud cry or wailing escaped even from the virgin tenderness of Pudentiana and Praxede, who were assiduous in helping their mother Claudia, and the other Christian matrons, to collect every drop of gore in sponges, and to deposit in caskets, the very sand saturated with his blood. No sound broke the dead stillness of the night, but stifled sobs and the almost mute murmuring of psalmody, as they drew out the nails, deposited also with care in another casket ;—receiving into their arms with great reverence the gory burden now loosened from the gibbet, they wrapped it hastily in a shroud ; and, then, with trembling haste, having sent some before to reconnoitre, bore it away through by-paths and thickets, until they came to a lonely region among the sand-mines of the Vatican.* Not far off was

* “Agrum Vaticanum, et ejusdem agri deum præsidem, appellatum acceperamus a vaticiniis, quæ vi atque instinctu ejus Dei in eo agro fieri solita essent.”—*Auli Gellii, Noctium Atticarum*, l. xvi. cap. 17 ; *Gronovii*. But we learn more accurately from a fragment of Terentius Varro, that the deity, who gave his name to this memorable locality, was called Vaticanus, because he presided over the first sounds of the human voice, or over the cries uttered by new-born infants : “Sicut Ajus deus appellatus, eique ara statuta est, quæ est infima Nova via, quod in eo loco divinitus vox edita

a grove and oracle of Apollo, where a stream fell with a murmuring sound into a little glen, shaded here and there with olives and wild vines. Here, some others issuing from a crypt, with muffled lights, helped to convey the apostle's body down the glen-side ; but at a turn of the rugged descent, they all suddenly disappeared as if by some subterraneous passage concealed by brushwood ; and, after traversing, by the light of flambeaus, a succession of long, narrow corridors, apparently without end or order—a labyrinth of darkness—they came at last to where they were anxiously expected by nearly all the clergy and laity of Rome, assembled in the heart of the catacombs.

erat ; ita Vaticanus deus nominatus, penes quem essent vocis humanæ initia, quoniam pueri simul atque parti sunt eam primam vocem edunt quæ prima in Vaticano syllaba, idcirco vagire dicitur, exprimente verbo sonum vocis recentis." St. August. (de Civ. Dei, l. viii. et xi.) gives the same derivation : "Vaticano qui infantium vagitibus præsidet," &c. The idol was the effigy of a child crying.

CHAPTER XV.

“ Ipsamet urbs obstupuit cum abditas in suis suburiis se novit habere civitates Christianorum colonias.”—*Baron. Ann. cxxx.*

“ In the midst of my days, I said: I will go down to the portals of death.”—*Isa. xxxviii. 10.*

“ Hic labor ille domūs, et inextricabilis error.”

Virgil. Aen. l. vi. 27.

FROM immemorial antiquity, the catacombs had been the mines from which the sand had been extracted for the erection not only of the enormous piles that cumbered the seven hills, but of the endless suburbs that spread out over the Campagna; for the Romans, who set the highest value on land, from first to last, and were too sagacious to destroy a canopy that left their labourers uninterfered with by the most torrid heats, instead of opening wide pits on the surface, sunk shafts or inclined passages to a considerable depth, and then excavating long, narrow, horizontal galleries in every direction, and so planned and formed as not to endanger the stability of the ground above—had the puzzolano, or sand, carried forth by slaves or beasts of burden, following one another, each with a small sack or two slung across the back, in long droves through the dark winding passages. And hence, from very early times, the whole country round the walls became perforated and undermined, particularly in those regions of it bordering the great roads.* These original excavations were greatly extended by the Christians, so far as forming junction

* Antonio Bosio, associating with himself one De Rossi, spent thirty years of his life in exploring subterranean Rome. Hence he got the title of the lynx of the catacombs, “lynceus vere cæmentiorum scrutator.” He made a map of the catacombs with extraordinary accuracy, and got the various pictures of the walls and ceilings, and the reliefs of the sarcophagi, &c., copied. The collec-

corridors, by which to escape from one catacomb to another.* They also fashioned recesses called "loculi" in the sides of the galleries, like tiers of shelves, where they deposited the martyred dead: they burrowed down, still forming catacomb below catacomb, like the successive stages or stories of a house, as if driven by persecution into the very bowels of the earth. They also formed shrines and chapels in these subterranean cities, even decorating them with sacred paintings.

"Burrowed out," says Aringhi, "with innumerable angles, nooks, and complicated windings, not only under the hills, but the level parts of all the surrounding country, these caverns, or, as they are more properly called, crypts, can hardly be said to receive

tions and manuscripts left by Bosius (a Maltese) were placed in the hands of Giovanni Severano, by Cardinal Barberini, librarian of the Vatican and Carlo Aldobrandini, ambassador of Malta, that he might arrange them for publication. He added many observations of his own, and as they required still more scrupulous research and observation, the work was taken in hand by Paolo Aringhi, who published the entire in his great work in two large folios, under the title of "Subterranean Rome." Many Protestant writers, finding fault with this work, and endeavouring to throw discredit on its statements, Marcantonio Boldetti, in order to set the controversy at rest, resolved to publish the evidences in support of Aringhi, which he had gleaned from the catacombs during nine and twenty years of indefatigable research. To the results arrived at by all these laborious antiquarians, a series of learned dissertations on the ecclesiastical rites of the three first ages, and on the paintings and sculpture of the catacombs, was added by Bottari, at the desire of Pope Clement XII. Marangoni, who assisted Boldetti in his thirty years' labours, published some detached pieces of great interest, which he contrived to save from the flames by which the greater part of their papers was destroyed. Besides the before-mentioned, several others, Pelliccia, Bonarroti, and D'Agincourt, have devoted a great part of their lives, D'Agincourt particularly, in seeking Rome, not only under its own ruins, but under ground — "sub Româ Romam querere."

* It is evident, from inscriptions given by Bottari, tom. iii. p. 131, tab. 171; and by Pistolesi, vol. ii. p. 9, that there was a confraternity formed for the purpose of excavating tombs, (loculi,) oratories, &c., and of generally extending the catacombs, so as to facilitate escape, and render them less incommodeous; they were styled "fossores," or diggers.

a glimmering light, here and there, by means of the narrow holes or shafts between them and the upper world ; and they branch out into such an infinity of passages, and are so broken up and subdivided by what may be termed streets and lanes, winding about and crossing and re-crossing one another, that a perfect labyrinth is formed ; and that of such immensity, that those by whom they have been explored compare them, not to one, but to many cities.”

“ While at Rome, in my boyhood,” says St. Jerome, “ I used often, of a Sunday, go about with my school-fellows visiting the tombs of the apostles and martyrs, frequently entering crypt after crypt, having the relics of the dead on either side of the long dark galleries, so dismal as to force that saying of the prophet on one’s memory, ‘ They shall go down alive into the region of death ; ’ the few foramens, or holes here and there over-head, only making darkness visible, and reminding you of Virgil’s line :—

‘ *Horror ubique animos, simul ipsa silentia terrent.* ’ ”

The haunts, from of old, of the malefactor, the fugitive, and of all evil doers,—the scenes of many a dark treason against life and innocence—damp, fetid, and dismal within, and having their entrances choaked up with every filth, and not unfrequently with the skeletons and rotting carcasses of slaves, and of such others as no one cared for ; the fact of their resorting to these dreary catacombs for interment of their dead, and for the celebration of the holy mysteries, helped not a little to deepen the general aversion and outcry against the Christians.* They were reviled by their slanderers as being “ a furtive crew, mute in public, but garrulous in holes and corners, ever seeking concealment, and shunning the light of

* For a refutation of Burnet’s silly attempt to identify the *puticuli*, or pits, into which the bodies of slaves and paupers were cast (principally in the Esquiline region) with the cemeteries of the martyrs, see Pistolesi, “ *Il Vaticano Illustrato*, ” vol. ii. p. 6.

day, because their practices were dark, and their worship made up of inhuman and incestuous orgies."

"Latebrosa et lucifugax natio!"—"furtive and afraid of light!" Is it Christianity? In its origin, in its enactments, in its objects, what was there that it should fear it? Emanating from the "splendour of the Father," whose word caused effulgence to burst forth from darkness, and who has flung a lustrous beauty over all that he has created, from the savannah and the sea enamelled with rainbow brilliancy to the heavens that tell of his glory in hymns of radiance; why should this celestial visitant hold in abhorrence or in apprehension that bland and glowing benediction, which it was her own chief errand to bring to those who "sat in darkness?" What right had the majority, at any rate, in a world surcharged with tribulation and tyrannous injustice, to find fault with the code of the beatitudes? Or how durst that system be attainted of intellectual cowardice, which, alone able to solve all the problems of man's being, waged open war on ignorance and imposture; or of sordid narrow-mindedness, seeing that its aim was to level every wall of separation, and to reunite not alone Jew and Samaritan, Roman, Barbarian, and Greek together, but slave and citizen, helot and aristocrat, in one common brotherhood and league of fraternal charity? It warred with nothing that was not a curse to humanity. It never inflicted anguish but to effect a cure. There was nothing bright, honourable, pure, or beneficent with which it would not have coalesced; or rather, it had affinities to attract and harmonize around itself whatever was capable of being sanctified, or turned to good. Music, architecture, painting, sculpture, poetry, all the arts, in short, that help to humanize, to soothe, or elevate the anguished or lethargic spirit. It would have shamed the muses into self-respect, by leading them, from whence they drew only the inebriety of the passions, to purer fountains of inspiration. As to man, it would have elevated him, from being a serf of Satan, to fill the throne

from which that once bright spirit fell. Even as a citizen, it would have ameliorated his condition, by establishing an imperishable reciprocity of truth, equity, and good offices between man and man, and by hallowing all the social ties; by inculcating obedience for conscience sake upon those who are subject, warning those who are high that there is One still higher; and, in season and out of season, by commanding charity to all. Woman it would have exalted to an eminence so august as to render her influence the corrective of the brutality of which, heretofore, she had been the instigation and the slave. By hallowing the connubial state and maintaining its indissolubility, Christianity would have made the domestic circle a miniature of the church, a preparatory school for heaven; it would have taught mankind no longer to regard their own offspring as they did those of dogs or cattle, but to reverence, nay, to regard them with awe, as being clients of the angels. It had a solace for every affliction, an expiation for every trespass, it took even from death its sting; and had it met from the world the reception it merited, although it would not have led the banished race back again to Eden, for that was not its object; it would have done better still, by exalting mortals above the power of adversity. It would have "renewed the face of the earth," and prepared the redeemed race for a beatitude of which that of Paradise was but a shadow. But its Author came to his own, and his own received him not. He had annihilated himself to give glory to God, and they impeached and put him to death as a blasphemer; he went about the land doing good, and they said he had a devil. And it was the same with his church. That immaculate spouse, purchased with his own blood, was pursued from the first, as the infant Saviour was pursued by Herod. The murderers of man's innocence and felicity, the demons, with all the allied passions—pride, lust, selfishness—had an instinctive presentiment that Christianity was destined for their

discomfiture. They were accordingly up in arms against it. They sought to stifle it in its cradle ; and when disappointed, they ceased not to pursue and persecute it with the most rabid and unrelenting animosity—saying all manner of evil things against its professors—belying them.*

* St. Matt. v. 11.

CHAPTER XVI.

“ They will lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, dragging you before kings and governors for my name’s sake. And it shall happen to you for a testimony.”—*St. Luke*, xxi. 12, 13.

“ But others were racked, not accepting deliverance, that they might find a better resurrection. And others had trial of mockeries and stripes; moreover, also, of bonds and prisons. They were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword.”—*St. Paul, Heb.* xi. 35—37.

No sooner had the apostles commenced to preach the resurrection of their divine Master, than they became the objects of that hostility which had pursued and followed him to the cross. His disciples were everywhere cast out from the synagogues, put under the ban of anathema, and pursued with torture, imprisonment, and death; not only through the land of Palestine, but even “unto foreign cities.” The Sanhedrim concocted a scheme to render them odious over the whole world. “With this view,” says St. Justin Martyr, “their emissaries were sent into all countries with rescripts, or letters, setting forth that the Nazarenes were an execrable sect, who adored as God one who had been put to death as a criminal, pretending that he had arisen on the third day, whereas his dead body had been stolen away by themselves, while the Roman guards were asleep. And that they were wont, in their mysteries, to immolate a newborn infant, sprinkled over with flour, and to feed upon its flesh and blood previous to their indulging in the most unnatural excesses.”*

“ We are said to be most execrable wretches,” says Tertullian, “making of infanticide a sacrament on

* See *Dial. cum Tryph. n. cviii. p. 213.* Ed. Venet. 1747, et *Apolog. i. 35, ii. 14.*—*Minut. Felix, 9, 10. 30, 31.*

which we feed." "They slake their thirst with an infant's blood," says their pagan accuser, in Minutius Felix, "its limbs they distribute; such are the sacrifices by which they seal and consecrate their union." "Do you believe also of us," says St. Justin Martyr to Tryphon the Jew, "that we devour men, and after having done so extinguish the lights, to imbrute ourselves in every promiscuous and nefarious excess?" "There are three principal heads of accusation against us," says St. Athenagoras in his *Apology*, "the rumour runs that we are atheists, that we indulge in Thyestean feasts, and incestuous intercourse." Similar enormities were cast in the face of the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, by their tormentors.

Predisposed to persecute the objects of imputations so atrocious, rendered plausible by a variety of circumstances, the pagans needed only a hint from the ruling powers to discharge their pent-up fury upon the devoted race. Hence, no sooner were they proscribed by Nero, than they were every where pursued, and subjected to the most excruciating tortures, as wretches hateful alike to gods and men. They were tormented by slow fires, some on grid-irons, some tied to stakes, some in cauldrons, made redhot; others were suspended by the feet, that while their bodies were burned with torches applied to the most sensitive parts, they might be at the same time suffocated by the smoke and heat. Tigellinus, one of the most infamous minions of Nero, and his chief adjutor in burning the city, so signalized himself by exploits of cruelty, that even the pagan writers have animadverted on the execrable ingenuity of one species of torture, to which he seems to have given the preference. The process is described thus: the Christian, stripped naked, was forced to put on a garment called the *tunica molesta*, made of papyrus, smeared on both sides with wax, and was then fastened to a high pole, from the top of which they continued to pour

down burning pitch and lard, a spike fastened under the chin preventing the excruciated victim from turning the head to either side, so as to escape the liquid fire, until the whole body, and every part of it, was literally clad and cased in flame. Such multitudes were destroyed by this one mode alone, that the whole area of the Vatican circus, round which they were impaled, was inundated knee-deep with the residuum of their bodies.*

Some were chopped to atoms; others fastened on wheels, and torn to pieces by being turned round against serried spikes or hooks of iron. They were stoned to death, beheaded, crucified, whipped with what they called "scorpions," till their bones and entrails were laid bare; they were fastened to wild horses, who dashed their heads against rocks, and tore their bodies through thickets and rough ways in their flight. Some, besmeared with honey, were tied to stakes, under a broiling sun, that they might be stung and eaten alive by wasps and insects;—others were flung into holes to be devoured by rats; others were buried alive; others, while living, were fastened to putrid carcasses, or crushed between huge blocks of stone, or torn asunder by having their legs fastened to the boughs of two opposite trees, which, being brought into proximity by main force, when that force was suspended, flew back to their natural positions with such violence, as to carry with them, each its mangled half of the martyr. Myriads were torn to pieces by lions, tigers, or eaten by wild dogs; they smeared their bodies with pitch, and set fire to them; poured boiling lead upon their heads, or cast their bodies into it, or made them sit down naked in chairs of iron at a red heat; they put them into nets, to be tossed on the horns of wild bulls, or into sacks with dogs and serpents, and cast them into the sea; they tore the flesh from their limbs with iron prongs and cards, plucked out their

* Calvis, Chronol. ad Ann. Chr. 54.

teeth and their hair with pincers, cut off their ears, their noses, tore out their tongues, inserted reeds under the nails of their toes and fingers, chopped off their hands and feet, flayed them alive, disemboweled them, or distended their bodies upon racks, until every bone started from its socket.* “The judge gloried in devising new and unheard-of tortures,” says Eusebius.—“It was deemed a virtue in them to do so. It was their whole study, the summit of their ambition; and that one triumphed over the others, who had surpassed them in refinement of cruelty.”† “It would be vain,” says Lactantius, “to attempt the description of the atrocities which the ministers of imperial vengeance have perpetrated on the disciples of Christ, in every region of the world. Merely to enumerate the various species of torments devised by their cruelty would fill many volumes, for each followed the peculiar bent of his own barbarous caprice, having received unlimited powers over his victims. Some, through apprehension of being accused of lenity, surpassed the cruel orders they had received; some were incited by the hatred they had conceived against us; others, by a desire to recommend themselves to the prince’s favour and gain promotion; like that judge in Phrygia, who set fire to the church when the faithful were assembled in it, and burned them all to death.”‡

But summary modes of death could not expiate the supposed guilt of the Christians, or satisfy the cruelty of their enemies. “Cupientibus mori,” says S. Cyprian, “non permittebatur occidi; sed tamdiu fessos tormenta laniarent, quamdiu non fidem, quae invicta est, vincerent, sed carnem, quae infirma est, fatigarent.”§ In submitting them to tortures the most excruciating, they were careful not to extinguish life too soon; they even caused their wounds to be dressed and medicated, that in being reopened the martyr might suffer tenfold agony; in like manner,

* Vid. de Mort. Persec. ver fin.

† Ecc. Hist. b. viii. ch. 12.

‡ Div. Inst. b. v. ch. 11.

§ Epist. 53. Ed. Baluz.

those who were reduced to the brink of the grave by every kind of cruel treatment and privation were suddenly removed from their noisome dungeons, and tended with solicitude, that starvation might not rescue them from the torments that were yet in store.*

Even the poor alleviation of sympathy was denied to the Christians. The Redeemer had repeatedly admonished his disciples, that they were to be “hated of all for his name’s sake;” and so they were. No matter what calamity befel the empire; “to the lions with the Christians!” was the cry. “If the Tiber rises,” says Tertullian, “or if the Nile does not; if an earthquake, or drought occur, the Christians are still the guilty cause.” The whole circus and amphitheatre rose up to demand the blood—the extermination of the detested race. Such clamours could hardly be resisted; but the emperors and the Roman magistrates were ever ready to lend them a willing ear. The dispensers of justice not only sentenced the Christians who were brought before the tribunals, but declared that all were at liberty to treat them “quasi non amplius homines essent,” as if they were not human beings. “It would seem,” writes an eye-witness of one of those terrific outbreaks, “as if the whole world had conspired for our destruction. While some station themselves round the tribunals to identify and accuse the Christians when captured, others, gathering mobs, armed with spits, clubs, lances, and every precarious weapon, hunt down the fugitives like wild beasts, and drag them forth from every hiding-place where they had taken shelter. Multitudes were torn to pieces by the heathens, both in the city and the country parts, without any juridical formality

* “The 16th chapter” (of Gibbon’s Hist. of the Decline and Fall, &c.) “I cannot help considering as a very ingenious and specious, but very *disgraceful* extenuation of the cruelties against the Christians. It is written in the most contemptible factious spirit of prejudice against the sufferers; it is unworthy of a philosopher and a man of humanity.”—*Mackintosh.*

whatsoever. All the endearing ties of kindred gave way to this cruel mania." "It was pitiable," continues the same holy father, "to see the son betray his father; the sire his son; the brother demanding his brother's blood, who followed the execrated law of Christ; the Pagan child perfidiously denouncing its Christian parent; and parents, instigated by heathen fanaticism, delivering up their own offspring to torture." Thus was literally verified the prediction of our Lord: "And you shall be betrayed by your parents, and brethren, and kinsmen, and friends; and some of you they will put to death, and you shall be hated of all for my name's sake."*

* St. Luke, xxi. 16, 17.

CHAPTER XVII.

“ Hic Petrus, hic Paulus, proceres; hic martyres omnes,
Quos simul innumerias magnæ tenet ambitus urbis,
Quosque per innumerias, diffuso limite, gentes,
Intra Romuleos veneratur ecclesia fines.”

S. Paulin.

“ They wandered about, being in want, distressed, afflicted—of whom the world was not worthy—wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth.”—*St. Paul, Heb. xi. 38.*

It was under the pressure of trials such as these, and not from predilection, that Christianity resorted to the catacombs. The earliest Christian use made of them was for the interment of the martyrs—an office of the most pious and ardent solicitude among the disciples of our Lord from the very first. Nor were they more zealous to discharge, than were the persecutors to prevent, it. They frequently cast the bodies of the martyrs into the cloacas of the city, or into the Tiber; and finding that this could not frustrate the invincible piety of the survivors, they used to throw them where they might be devoured by dogs and birds of prey, setting guards to watch them from some distant eminence or tower; in fine, the very bones they used to burn, and cast the ashes on the passing river, to destroy, as they thought, their hope of a resurrection. At other times they mixed them up with the bones of brute beasts, that the Christians might not be able to discover them. But vain were the attempts of pagan malice, in competition with the ingenuity and heroism of Christian charity. Even by timid virgin hands, the precious relics of Christ’s champions were rescued as it were from the lion’s mouth, every drop of their blood collected, and

religiously enshrined with their bodies, or whatever remained of them. Not unfrequently the instruments of torture, or fac-similes of them, were also deposited in their tombs. Christians beyond number fell victims to their fearless zeal in discharging these hallowed rites ; and sometimes the intensity of tribulation in this most trying grievance could not be restrained from breaking forth into complaint ; but still, under the direction of deacons appointed for the purpose, and in the face of every danger, the bodies were sought out—every bone and fragment of the mangled frame, and the very blood-stains were religiously collected. Not only that, but the obsequies were performed with all solemnity ; and the name of the martyr, with some holy emblem,—as a palm-branch, a dove with the olive, the $\chi\theta\upsilon\sigma$, or monogram of Christ, were usually sculptured on the slab closing up the *locululum*, or recess for the body, albeit with little of artistic skill ; and apparently with a hand unsteady, either from trepidation or from grief. “ Assemble in the cemeteries,” says St. Clement, disciple and second or third successor of St. Peter, “ there attend to the lectures from the sacred books ; as also to the recital of psalms and hymns for the martyrs, for all the saints departed this world, and for all our brethren who have died in the faith. Let the eucharistic mystery acceptable to God—the anti-type of your royal body, (that is the sacrament by which all the members of the Church are made one in Christ,*) be offered up when you thus assemble in the cemeteries ; and so fail not to follow your departed brethren in the faith with chanting of psalms.”†

It is plain, from the tenor of this text, that, even in the life-time of the Apostles, the catacombs had already become, not only the cemeteries of the Christians, but their only churches ; there they received instruction, heard the Gospel preached, recited

* 1 Corinth. x. 16, 17.

† S. Clem. l. vii. c. ult. Apostol. Const. apud Aringhi, Rom. Subt. &c.

or sung the divine offices, according to the appointed hours, and joined in solemn formularies of prayer ; but, above all, in the eucharistic sacrifice for the souls of the departed. Indeed, it is expressly stated by an ancient author, that St. Peter himself was in the habit of discharging the sacred functions of the apostleship in the catacombs. “ Pope Liberius dwelt about three miles from the city,” says Anastasius, “ in the cemetery of Novella, and near to that of Ostrianus, *where Peter used to baptize.*” He used also to preach and baptize in the sand crypts of the Vatican.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ Blessed art thou, Simon, son of John ; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee, that thou art Peter, (a rock,) and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” &c.—*St. Matt. xvi. 17, 18.*

“ The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed—which is indeed the least of all seeds, but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof.”

St. Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

IT was amidst the sorrows and the sufferings of the catacombs that the foundations of that throne were laid and consolidated, which has seen so many proud dynasties disappear, and has itself defied so many assaults of time and violence. There the apostolical succession was continued in despite of every effort to interrupt it. No sooner was one pontiff dragged from the chair of Peter to martyrdom, or massacred while seated in it, (as happened to St. Stephen,) than a successor was elected, ordained, consecrated, and enthroned with as much promptitude and solemnity as if the church enjoyed the most haleyon calm. Linus succeeds to Peter, Cletus succeeds to Linus, to Cletus, Clement ; to Clement, Anencletus ; to him, Evaristus ; to Evaristus, Alexander ; to Alexander, Sixtus ; then Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter, Eleutherius, then Victor, then Zephyrinus, Callixtus, Urban, Pontianus, Anterus ; to Anterus, Fabian ; to Fabian, Cornelius.* Peter was a Galilean, Linus an Etruscan, Cletus and Clement

* Vid. Act. Sanct. die 1st April. Also, the *Dissertatio Posterior de annis prim. Rom. Ep.*, &c. of Dr. Pearson, Prot. Bish. of Chester.

were of Rome, Anencletus was of Athens, Evaristus of Antioch, Eleutherius of Nicopolis ; an African, St. Victor, succeeds to a native of Ionia ; the anchorite, St. Telesphorus, of Greece, is succeeded by an Athenian philosopher ; St. Hyginus, the Athenian, by an Italian, St. Pius, of Aquileia, to be followed by St. Soter and other Romans ; as if every portion of Christianity was to contribute its purest blood to cement the foundations of that throne which was established, not for any one province, but for the entire church ; for, whether from Greece or Africa, from Italy or Asia, the popes of the catacombs were sure of the martyr's crown.

And as they had borne his sublime office in life, and participated in his martyrdom, neither were they separated in death from the Prince of the apostles. “Obiit martyr,” or “Martyrio coronatus, sepultus est juxta corpus Beati Petri, in Vaticano ;” that is, “having been crowned with martyrdom, he was laid near the body of St. Peter, in the Vatican,” is generally, during this epoch, the conclusion of each pope's history, as we find it in Anastasius, and in the still more ancient collection made from the archives of the catacombs, by Pope Damasus, at St. Jerome's request. It is true, we read of several being interred in the great catacomb, hard by the Appian way, now called the catacomb of St. Sebastian ; but this is only another proof of their anxiety to be laid beside St. Peter's body, which, with that of St. Paul, had been translated for greater security to this cemetery, called of Callixtus, because the holy pontiff of that name had it adorned in honour of the apostles. Even when the popes died in exile, their faithful deacons had their bodies carried to Rome, in despite of every difficulty and danger, that they might repose with their predecessors. Thus the body of St. Pontianus, who suffered death by the blow of a club, in Sardinia, whither he had been banished with St. Hippolytus, one of the cardinal priests, was secretly conveyed on ship-board, by the blessed Fabianus, who had it conveyed

to Rome, and laid near the body of St. Peter, in the cemetery of Callixtus.

But although banished from the light of day, dwelling in these dreary crypts and labyrinths of perpetual night and suffering, their influence extended more widely than that of Cæsar. Looked up to by all as the successors of St. Peter, as the rulers of that church, "with which," according to St. Irenæus, "it was indispensable for all churches, that is, for all the faithful of Christ, no matter where dispersed, to be in communion, on account of its superior jurisdiction or supremacy," the trustees of that deposit of doctrine inherited from the two great apostles, established in the chair, or throne, from which sacerdotal unity proceeded, and by which it was to be preserved; all the obscurity of the sepulchres where they dwelt cannot conceal from us their pre-eminence and their universal jurisdiction in the rising kingdom of the Redeemer. Through them the unity of the church was preserved and found its expression. All the bishops of the world were bound to be in communion with the popes of the catacombs; for to be in ecclesiastical communion with the see of Peter was to be in communion with the church; and no one was considered a catholic who was separated from Rome. They were resorted to from all provinces of the Christian world; from Spain and Egypt, from Africa and Pontus, as having authority to reinstate those who had been deposed or separated from communion by the local bishops; to watch over the teaching even of the greatest patriarchs; to prevent innovation and enforce uniformity in discipline, whenever the welfare of the church required it. The authority by which all heresies were confounded, which in every crisis gave forth the watch-word of orthodoxy, (whose great champions it never forsook and always vindicated,) the see of Peter, the apostolic see by excellence, though the most incessantly and cruelly persecuted of all, never ceased to watch with vigilant and energetic solicitude over the interests of the universal church.

But, as if the spiritual empire of Rome, now being founded in the catacombs, were, in some sort, to resemble that empire of force, which, from a beginning so insignificant, had arisen to such unexampled greatness through a variety of difficulties and perils ; while extending its care and its energies to the most remote frontiers, and in acquiring new conquests, the Roman church was ever careful to keep up the most rigid order and discipline at home ; nor did its governors, like the great statesmen of the old republic, ever contemn as trifling, and beneath their notice, any thing that could promote decorum, or by which order might be affected. The following enactments (chiefly respective of the city) are taken from the records transmitted to St. Jerome by Pope Damasus, who no doubt had them copied from the original statutes and registries in the archives.*

St. Linus, who administered the city even in the lifetime, and during the intervals of absence of St. Peter, ordained by his direction, " that females should come veiled to assist at the holy mysteries and other offices of religion ;" a regulation of the last importance and necessity, when we recollect what the tone of female conduct was in Rome at a time when Messalina led the fashion.

St. Cletus, who had been appointed joint administrator (for the suburban districts,) with St. Linus, having succeeded him in the apostolic chair, divided the city between twenty-five priests. St. Clement appointed " seven regions to the faithful notaries of the church," whose office it was, with diligence, solicitude, and

* Beatissimo Papæ Damaso, H̄ieronymus :—" Gloriam sanctitatis tuæ nostra humilitas deprecatur, ut secundum apostolicæ sedis auctoritatem quam cognovimus per tuam sanctitatem gubernari, actus gestorum a Beati Petri Apostoli principatu usque ad vestra tempora, quæ scilicet in sede tuâ gesta sunt, nobis ordinem paucis narrare digneris," &c.—*Ex Antiq. Codic. MSS. Ap. Act. SS. Aprilis, tom. i. p. 4.*

What a pity that St. Jerome was prevented from writing the history of the Church, for which he was preparing materials when he wrote this letter to St. Damasus !

circumspection, to make out the acts of the martyrs, each in his own region. St. Anencletus built an oratory over the body of St. Peter, in the Vatican, where the popes might be buried. St. Evaristus divided Rome into titles, or parishes, and ordained that seven deacons should attend the bishop in the ministry of preaching, as the statute has it—"propter stylum veritatis." St. Alexander had recitations from the passion of our Lord introduced into the Liturgy or prayers said by the priest in celebrating mass—"passionem Domini miscuit in precationem sacerdotum quando missæ celebrantur"—and ordained that salt should be mingled in the blessed water with which the faithful sprinkled their dwellings. St. Sixtus ordained that none but ministers of the sanctuary should touch the sacred vessels; that when a bishop was summoned to the apostolic see, he should not, unless furnished with letters of salutation from the pontiff, be received in his parish or diocese; and that as the priest began the canon, or action of the mass—"infra actionem sacerdotis"—the congregation beginning the hymn, (called Triumphal,) should sing—"Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth," &c. St. Telesphorus ordained that Lent should last seven weeks, that midnight masses should be celebrated on the nativity of our Lord, and that in the beginning of the sacrifice the hymn of the angels—"Gloria in excelsis Deo"—should be chanted. St. Hyginus arranged the privileges, and order of precedence among the clergy. St. Anicetus ordained that they should not wear their hair flowing. St. Pius issued ordinances concerning "the heresy of the Jews," (most probably the precursors of the Quartodecimans,) and the celebration of Easter, relative to which his brother Hermas had a revelation confirmatory of the Roman discipline, which was ultimately enforced all over the church. St. Soter ordained that no nun—"nulla monacha"—should touch the consecrated pall, nor minister incense in the church. St. Eleutherius received letters from Lucius, king of Britain, (grandson of Caractacus,)

praying to be received into the church by his mandate —“*ut Christianus efficeretur per ejus mandatum*”—that is, that the pope would send missionaries to instruct and baptize himself and his people. He condemned the Gnostic practice of abstaining from certain kinds of food, as if from the evil principle. St. Victor renewed the ordinance of St. Pius with respect to Easter, and caused councils to meet for that purpose in all countries, from Gaul to Asia. He also defined that, in case of necessity, any Gentile making profession of the Christian faith might be baptized in a spring, a fountain, or in the sea. St. Zephyrinus decreed that all ordinations, whether of clerics, levites (deacons,) or priests, should be held in the presence of the people; also, that all the priests should assist when the bishop celebrated, besides other ordinances relative to the distribution of the blessed eucharist. St. Callixtus instituted the fast of Saturday thrice a year, to procure from heaven abundance of corn, wine, and oil. St. Urban ordained that the sacred vessels should be of silver, and procured twenty-five large silver patens—previously glass ones were in use —“*patenas vitrias ante sacerdotes in ecclesiâ ministri portarent*,” was a statute of St. Zephyrinus. St. Anterus caused a collection of the Acts of the Martyrs to be made—“*in integro*”—and deposited securely in the archives of the church. St. Fabian divided the regions among the deacons, and appointed six sub-deacons over the notaries who wrote down the acts of those who suffered martyrdom. He caused many structures to be erected in the cemeteries. St. Stephen ordained that priests and deacons should wear the sacred vestments *only* in the church. St. Dionysius made a new arrangement of the churches, making the cemeteries parishes—“*presbyteris ecclesias divisit, et cæmeteria et parochias dioceses instituit.*” St. Felix appointed masses to be celebrated on the tombs of the martyrs.

CHAPTER XIX.

“Amen, amen, I say unto you; except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath life everlasting, and I will raise him up in the last day.”—*St. John, vi. 54, 55.*

“We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle.”—*St. Paul, Heb. xiii. 10.*

“**L**IKE bees to a hive,” says Chrysostom, “the Christians used to flock to the catacombs, on account of the holy mysteries,” that being strengthened by partaking of the body and blood of Christ—the food of the strong—they might be inspired with heroism to resist his enemies and win the martyr’s crown. “No one can be fit for martyrdom,” says St. Cyprian, “whom the church has not armed, and the soul gives way that has not been nerved, and as if set on fire by the blessed eucharist. Wherefore, by suggestion of the Holy Ghost, and by admonition of our Lord, in many and manifest visions, we ordain that the soldiers of Christ be drawn together within the camp, and armed for the fight.”—“*Idoneus esse non potest ad martyrium, qui ab ecclesia non armatur ad prælium, et mens deficit quam non recepta eucharistia erigit et accedit. Placuit nobis Spiritu Sancto suggestente, et Domino per visiones multas et manifestas admononente, colligere intra castra milites Christi, immo pugnaturis arma suggestere.*”*

Thus we read in the Acts of Pope Stephen’s martyrdom:—“The persecution under the emperors Valerian and Gallienus beginning to rage in all its terrors, Stephen having convened his clergy, exhorted

* *Ep. ad PP. Cornel. ii.*

all to martyrdom, and continued to hold conference and to celebrate masses assiduously. And when he was brought to the temple of Mars, to force him to sacrifice, there came on an earthquake, so that all who held him fled in terror, and being left alone the pontiff returned to his people, in the cemetery of Lucina ; where he commenced, again, to instruct them in the divine precepts, and to admit them to the communion of the sacrament of Christ's body ; nor had he yet consummated the celebration of the solemnities of mass, when the satellites of the emperors again returning, struck off his head as he was seated on his throne."

Again, in the Acts of St. Diodorus, we read :—
“ Wherefore, it having come to pass, that the Almighty vouchsafed many benefits to those who visited the tombs of the martyrs in this crypt ; it happened that on their natal day, there assembled an immense multitude—men, and matrons with their babes, and the youth of both sexes, and of every age. This being intimated to Numerian, by the spies, he ordered the entrance of the catacomb to be walled up, and when this was done, a sand hill was thrown in upon them through the foramina, or air-holes, of the cemetery ; so that while they were participating in the holy communion, and celebrating the praises of the martyrs, they, also, arrived at the crown of martyrdom. Amongst whom were Diodorus, a priest, the deacon Marianus, and many in minor orders ; but of the mixed multitude of laity, neither the number nor the names have been collected.”*

Thus were the devoted Christians pursued with destruction even at dead of night, and in the caverns of the earth. This last solace of celebrating the divine mysteries, in commemoration of their departed brethren, and partaking the sacrament of immortality, could not be attempted even in those dismal tombs but at the risk of life. By the imperial laws it was

* *Apud Aringhi, Roma Subter. tom. i. l. i. 31.*

death ;* and “areæ non sint !” “ destruction to the catacombs !” was among the fierce denunciations that used to make the circus and amphitheatre ring again. With what truth and pathos might not the Christians of that heroic generation exclaim : “ O ill-fated times, when even in the caverns of the earth we cannot find security to offer up our vows and celebrate the sacred mysteries ! What more miserable than life ; in death what so bitter as to have our friends and parents prevented from composing our bodies in the grave ?” But this is only a faint echo of the original, found inscribed upon a tomb in the cemetery of Callixtus, the greatest and most celebrated of the catacombs.

O TEMPORA INFESTA !
QUIBUS INTER SACRA ET VOTA
NE IN CAVERNIS QUIDEM SALVARI POSSUMUS.
QUID MISERUS VITA !
SED QUID MISERIUS IN MORTE
CUM AB AMICIS ET PARENTIBUS
SEPELIRI NEQUEANT. †

* “ Proconsul dixit : justum est ut nulla conciliabula faciant, neque cæmeteria ingrediantur, quod qui face re comprehensus fuerit, capite plectatur.”—*Pont. Act. Proconsul. vid. Aringhi*, tom. i. p. 14, et *Baron. an. 260*. Pope Cornelius, Ep. 82, says, “ Publice neque in cryptis notioribus missas agere Christianis licuisse.”

† Vid. Aringhi, ubi supra.

CHAPTER XX.

“A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembeth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So you also now indeed have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you.”—*St. John, xvi. 21, 22.*

WHEN those who had borne the apostle’s body from the cross on the Janiculum, and conveyed it in through the dismal labyrinth of the catacombs, at length arrived where they were so anxiously expected, and had silently deposited their hallowed burden upon a bier, or catafalk, in the midst of the assembly, there was, at first, a profound stillness: a syncope, as it were, of the very breathing and pulsations of vitality; and with looks rendered more pale by the glare of lamps and torches, their eyes were turned from the lifeless corse of St. Peter, upon each other, in emotions that baffled utterance. Their half-stifled sobs, the moanings of grief, and a low wailing, rendered more intensely piteous by the efforts made to stifle it, at last burst forth into gusts of tribulation, so loud and universal as to fill the crypts with echoes of woe, through all their most remote galleries and recesses. St. Linus descending from the chair, where the Prince of the apostles, assisted by St. Paul, had installed him, St. Cletus, St. Clement, St. Anencletus, with a crowd of holy bishops, who had come on various errands, and from all lands, to the “apostolic see,” to the “mother of churches,” and the “chair of unity,” came, and kneeling beside the body, or at its feet, kissed its wounds with the tenderest veneration; next the Roman clergy, that august body of presbyters and deacons, who had co-operated with St.

Peter and St. Paul in the apostolic see ; and, finally, the laity, in their classes, according to sex and age, gathered round their great patriarch and father in the faith ; nor did they cease to kiss his wounded feet, or to pour out floods of tears until every stain of gore had been washed from his venerable limbs.

“ These tears,” said St. Linus, “ we do not inhibit : to do so would be cruel and unnatural, and subversive of hallowed custom. Our Lord wept over Lazarus. Imitate his example ; and, therefore, let your wailing not be immoderate, but serene, and tempered with the fear of God. If thus you mourn, no offence is offered to the hope of the resurrection ; your tears will be only a salutary confession of that living charity which causes each member of Christ’s mystical body to sympathize with all the others ; and if it be an act of filial piety for children to weep, and be afflicted when a fond parent leaves them, though it be only to go into some distant province and return, or to make a voyage by sea ; alas, shall it not be meet and just in us, equitable and salutary, to weep and mourn after the departure of the great father of the faithful, though it be to receive his diadem and his throne in the kingdom to which we also hope to come ?”*

And small blame to the Romans for being disconsolate, when they called to mind the extent of St. Peter’s claims upon their gratitude, and of the loss the infant church had sustained in his death.

“ When the twelve apostles,” says St. Leo, “ having received, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, the gift of tongues, for the imbuing of the whole world with the Gospel, had each undertaken that portion which fell to his lot, or to which he was appointed, when they divided the earth amongst them, the most blessed Peter, prince of the apostolic order, was destined for the capital of the Roman empire ; that the light of truth, revealed for the salvation of all nations, might more efficaciously diffuse itself from the head

* From St. Chrysostom’s 61st Homily on the Gospel according to St. John.

over the whole body of the world. What nation, at that period, without its representatives at Rome, or what corner of the earth could remain ignorant of what Rome had learned? Here it was that the erroneous theories of philosophy were to be put down, the phantoms of earthly sapience to be dissipated; here the worship of demons was to be confuted; here, where a most diligent superstition had amassed and brought together whatever had been invented by vain error all over the world, the impiety of all sorts of profanation was to be destroyed. To this city, therefore, thou, O most blessed apostle Peter didst not hesitate to come. The colleague of thy glory, the apostle Paul, being still occupied in the ordination of other churches, thou, as it were alone, didst venture into this forest of howling monsters, displaying greater constancy by embarking upon this ocean of turbulent and fathomless iniquity, than when thou didst walk upon the waters. Already, thou hadst instituted in the faith those of the circumcision who believed; already, thou hadst founded the church of Antioch, where first rose the dignity of the Christian name. Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, had been already filled through thy preaching, with subjects of the Christian law; nevertheless, without, for an instant, desponding of the enterprise's success, or considering your advanced age and infirmities, you hastened to plant the trophy of Christ crucified upon the Roman capitol; knowing well that there, by Divine pre-ordination, there awaited thee the honour of reigning over the Redeemer's kingdom, but at the same time of sharing in his passion.”*

According to the Chronicle of Eusebius, St. Peter entered Rome under the empire of Claudius, in the second year of his reign, and in the second year also

* Serm. i. de SS. Apost. Petro et Paulo; and in Sermon 80, he says that St. Peter, who had trembled before a poor handmaid in the court of Caiphas, did not hesitate to proclaim the gospel in a city, not less the slave of the follies and impieties of all nations, than she was the mistress of all people.

of the 205th Olympiad ; that is, about twenty-five years before his martyrdom, the period assigned to his pontificate by the Roman church, at a time (A. D. 354,) it would seem, when the Chronicle of Eusebius had not come under her notice. To the present day, the Latin churches celebrate the 18th of January, under the title of the chair of St. Peter at Rome. "We still have the office of the mass," says Tillemont, "which was celebrated in France on this festival before the Roman liturgy was introduced by Charlemagne."* The apostle is said to have performed many and extraordinary miracles in Rome ; and wonderful, no doubt, must have been the evidences that converted such numbers as to have rendered the faith of the Roman church "renowned over the whole world," even before it was visited by St. Paul. From Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, book ii. ch. 14 ; from St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catech. vi. p. 54 ; from St. Irenæus, against the heresies, b. i. ch. 20 ; Tertullian de Anima, ch. xxxiv. ; Theodore Hær. b. i. ch. 1 ; from St. Justin Martyr, Apol. ii. ; besides many others, it seems that St. Peter was induced to hasten his visit to Rome in order to counteract the infamous impostures of Simon Magus.

This patriarch of heresies, especially of the execrable Gnostic sects, who brought such calamity and disgrace on the Christian name during the early ages, was a Samaritan of a small town called Gitthis. By his juggling and magic arts, he had succeeded to a great extent in duping his fellow countrymen into the belief that he was an emanation from the Divinity : "to whom," says the Scripture, "they all gave ear, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is

* Memoirs pour servir à l'Hist. Eccles. tom. i. p. 171. Paris, 1693. The festival of the Chair of Peter is spoken of as of ancient institution, by St. Augustin : "Institutio solemnitatis hodiernæ a senioribus nostris cathedræ nomen accepit ideo quod primus apostolorum Petrus *hodie* episcopatūs cathedram suscepisse referatur ; recte ergo ecclesiæ natatē sedis illius colunt, quam apostolus pro ecclesiarum salute suscepit."—*Serm. xvi. de Sanct.*

the power of God, who is called the Great." This was an evident attempt to counterfeit the character of the Redeemer ; and throughout the entire career of Simon we trace the same design ; taken up in order to drive a trade upon the enthusiasm excited at that time by the fame of our Lord's divinity and the apostolic miracles, throughout the whole world. With this view, he pretended to become a convert, and had himself baptized by St. Philip, the deacon, expecting to get some right profitable knowledge by this initiation ; and when he beheld the wonderful effects produced in those on whom St. Peter imposed hands, he could restrain himself no longer, but, offering money to St. Peter and St. John, said, " Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I shall lay *my* hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." But Peter said to him, " Thy money to thyself, to perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be bought with money. Thou hast no part, nor lot in this matter," (which Simon would have given a round sum to have,) " for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Do penance, therefore, from this thy wickedness ; and pray to God if perhaps this thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee, for I see thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity."* It was on returning to Rome for the last time, in company with St. Paul, to sustain the church under the persecution of Nero, that he totally overthrew and confounded the magician, who had risen into such high favour with the emperor and the Romans, as to be enrolled among their gods ; and this was one of the causes of their being put to death.

The following description of an encounter that took place between Simon and St. Peter on the apostle's first visit to Rome, is from an eye-witness.

" It happened while Simon was denouncing St.

* Acts of the Apostles, ch. viii., from ver. 9 to 25.

Peter as a magician, and endeavouring to stir up the populace against him, that there passed by that same place, with a great concourse of people, and loud lamentations, the funeral of a widow's only son. Then said St. Peter to the multitude who favoured Simon, 'Approach the bier, and let the body they are carrying to the tomb be set down between us, and let the faith of that one of us be followed as true who shall raise the dead man to life.' When the people had done this, Simon cried out, 'Now, if I make him alive, will you kill Peter?' 'We will burn him alive,' responded the multitude. Then Simon, invoking all the demons, began by their ministry so to act that the body was moved, which the people seeing, began to laud Simon to the skies, shouting death to Peter. He having, with the greatest difficulty, obtained a hearing, said to the people, 'If he be really alive, let him speak, let him walk, let him take food, let him return to his house; which, if he fail to do, know that you are deceived by Simon.' On this the people cried out, 'If he do not thus, let Simon suffer the penalty he fixed for Peter.' But Simon, pretending to feel insulted at being doubted of by his abettors, was taking himself off, when the crowd laid hold of him, and loading him with all sorts of abuse, would not let him go. Then Peter, expanding his hands to heaven, said, 'Lord Jesus Christ, who has said to us thy disciples, go in my name, and cast out devils, cure the infirm, and raise the dead; reanimate this youth, that all this multitude may know that thou art God, and that there is no other besides thee, who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest world without end, amen.' But, rising up, the youth who had been dead adored Peter, saying, 'I saw the Lord Jesus Christ commanding the angels, and saying, at the petition of my friend Peter, let the orphan of the widow be restored to his mother.' Then all the people shouted with one voice, 'Whom Peter preacheth is the only God.' They would have

burned Simon alive, but St. Peter saved him, saying, 'Our Master taught us this, to do good for evil.' ^{**}

It was not in his first, but probably in some one of the many after visits paid by him to Rome, that St. Peter wrote that letter dated from Babylon, the mystic name by which, according to the interpretation of Eusebius and St. Jerome, he indicated the imperial city. Lactantius† says Peter predicted many future events shortly before his death, and amongst the rest the approaching destruction of Jerusalem; and that the number of conversions in his last visit was immense.‡ St. Peter had been apprised by our Lord when appointing him supreme pastor that he was to be crucified, it was afterwards revealed to him at what time he was to suffer; and St. Athanasius tells us that it was revealed beforehand to the two glorious apostles that they were to die in Rome. As St. Peter was departing from the city, at the entreaty of his people, who had found means to set his prison open, as it was opened before by an angel, he is said to have met his divine Master, just outside the Capenian gate, coming along the Via Appia as if bearing his cross. "Whither, Lord, art thou going?" exclaimed the apostle. "Domine, quo vadis?" "I am going to Rome," our Lord replied, "to be again crucified." "Vado Romam, iterum crucifigi." Then St. Peter understood that the hour was come, when as supreme vicar, and locum-tenens of the Prince of pastors, he

* From the letter of Marcellus (son of Marcus, praefect of the city,) who had been a disciple of Simon's, to SS. Nereus and Achilleus, who had written from their place of exile in the isle of Pontia, for information that might enable them to confute two of the magician's emissaries, who were misleading the islanders. The banishment by Domitian, of Flavia Domitilla, niece of Flavius Clemens, who had been consul, was adverted to by several pagan writers; and it is probable that the two eunuchs above named were among the "many others," "alii plurimi," said by the same writers to have been banished with her.—See Euseb. Eccl. Hist. b. iii. ch. 17, and S. Jerome, in Chron. Their acts with the authentications of the letter of Marcellus are given in the Acta Sanct. die xii. Maii. tom. iii. pp. 9, 10.

† Lib. iv. 21.

‡ De Mor. Per. ii.

was to be assimilated to Him whom he represented, even in the manner of his death. We are informed by Eusebius, that St. Peter was crucified with his head towards the earth. He requested this of his executioners, according to St. Ambrose, that his own sufferings might be more intense, and lest he should seem, as it were, to rival his beloved Lord. Many of the holy fathers say he was nailed to the cross. Tertullian says that he was fastened to it with cords. Tillemont thinks both modes were resorted to—"on croit que l'on peut avoir fait l'un et l'autre."*

While absorbed in sorrow, profound but still tempered by resignation and hope, and busied in embalming the venerable body and arraying it in its vestments and insignia, they were suddenly filled with terror by rapid footfalls and the gleam of lights coming along the galleries from towards the entrance of the catacombs; but just as the bishops and clergy were lifting the body to hurry away with it into recesses still more profound, the salutation of "Peace be to you" from well known voices, reassured them again, and almost forgetting for an instant the immediate object of their sorrow and solicitude, they hung upon the lips of the new comers while they described the glorious triumph by which St. Paul had terminated his career and borne away his crown. It was at a place called the Salvian waters—"ad aquas Salvias"—about three miles from the Ostian gate, where there are three little springs, that he was beheaded. Nero himself, who had been vehemently incensed against the apostle for having converted some of his paramours to a life of sanctity, was present to satiate his innate cruelty and to entertain Tiridates, the great Scythian satrap and magician, by this sight; but even under the despot's eye, and unappalled by the array of death that awaited them, three of the prætorians stepped forth from the ranks, accoutred as they were, to lay down their military girdles and proclaim their faith in that Jesus for whom Paul was about to die.

* Page 190, *ubi supra.*

The holy offices of the nocturns then commenced ; and mingling the psalms of king David with lessons of Holy Writ and with canticles and hymns, their anguished spirits were soothed by degrees, and as the holy rites of the liturgy proceeded their sorrow was turned into joy. Their strong and lively faith in the communion of saints exalted their thoughts from the dreary crypts to the palace of the eternal King of glory, and it was no longer two emaciated and gory corses they beheld, but two princes bright and sublime, the envy and admiration of applauding heaven, as each is crowned with “a diadem unfading” by the right hand of the Eternal. After the pledge of Christian charity mutually given according to their respective classes as to age and sex, the offertory, and preface, they took up the triumphal hymn with such fervour, as the holy pontiff Linus was entering on the canon or action of the mass, that, “Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth, full are the heavens and the earth of thy glory,” resounded through the catacombs ; and having profoundly adored and participated in the body and blood of the Lord, such grace and fortitude came to them with this food of strength and immortality, that they issued from the catacombs not only ready to suffer for the name of Christ, but despising and esteeming as of no account the momentary trials by which they were to purchase “an eternal weight of glory.”

CHAPTER XXI.

—“ What trash is Rome,
What rubbish, and what offal.”

Cassius, in Julius Cæsar, Act i.

“ Sed compleri interim Urbs funeribus, Capitolium victimis ; alius filio, fratre alius, aut propinquo, aut amico interfectis, agere grates deis, ornare lauru domum, genua ipsius (Neronis) advolvi, et dextram osculis fatigare.”—*Tacit. Ann. l. xv. 71.*

IT was still night, and the dark hour immediately before the dawn favoured the safe return of the Christians to their dwellings. Retracing their steps through all the dark intricacies of the crypts, Pudens and his party emerged, as they had entered, by the issue in the little copse, near the waterfall. They moved along the whole length of the Vatican circus, not without recollecting the martyrs who had suffered there ; then on by the memorial of Romulus and the terebinth-tree, regarded as sacred by the pagans, and inlaid with certain cabalistic words, in the Etruscan character ; but before coming to the Tiber they separated. Claudia with Timotheus, followed at a short interval by the two virgins and their brother, moved up the right bank, to cross the river by the Elian, while the venerable patrician went straight over the triumphal bridge, and crossed the Campus Martius, in the direction of the Capitol.

The shadow of its temples and towers, standing in dark relief against the eastern sky, came full upon his view as he emerged from the cypress groves, around the Mausoleum of the Cæsars, and, with them, prospects still more gloomy, that saddened him not a little. That conference upon the Tarpeian tower with St. Peter recurred to his memory, and his steps

were almost unconsciously turned towards a scene teeming with recollections that nearly overpowered him with emotion. As he ascended, with slow and thoughtful tread, the marble flights that led from the field of Mars to the plain of the capitol, and thence to the tower's summit, he counted over in his mind all the friends of that morning, who had fallen victims to Nero's revenge and cruelty after Piso's conspiracy was discovered.

“ This plot,” says Cornelius Tacitus, “ did not originate in any strong attachment to Piso, a young nobleman of the Calpurnian family, in high favour with the populace, on account of his affability and the personal attributes of portliness and beauty in which nature had highly gifted him, as he was recommended to the aristocracy, abandoned to pleasure, and dreading any interference with their vices above any other calamity, by the effeminacy and dissolute courses of his life. Nor have I been able,” he continues, “ to ascertain who was the first to set on foot and concoct a scheme which would seem to have been taken up at one and the same time by several ; but their firmness in the hour of trial would lead to the conclusion, that Subrius Flavius, a tribune of the guards, and the centurion Sulpicius Asper, were foremost in it. Vivid hatred of Nero induced Lucanus Annaeus and Plautius Lateranus to join. As to Flavius Scevinus and Afranius Quintianus, it was a matter of just surprise that two men of senatorial rank, notorious for the most infamous voluptuousness and effeminacy, had enrolled themselves in an enterprise of such peril. By hints thrown out, and general reflections during the excitement and close familiarity of convivial entertainments, Tullius Senecio, Cervarius Proculus, Vulcatius Araricus, Julius Tigurinus, Munatius Gratus, Antonius Natalis, and Martius Festus, all of the equestrian order, were induced to join—a step particularly daring on the part of Senecio, who was at the time amongst the prime intimates of Nero. Natalis was Piso's bosom friend ; the others were led

on, in the hope of advancing their fortunes by the revolution. Besides the military hands, Subrius and Sulpicius, already mentioned, four others, Granius Silvanus and Statius Proximus, tribunes of the Praetorian cohorts, and the centurions Maximus Scaurus and Venetus Paulus, were brought in. But the great prop of the enterprise was Fenius Rufus, prefect of the guards, an officer of high repute, and detested on that account as well as through sheer malice, by Tigellinus, who kept eternally whispering in the emperor's ear against him, as a traitor, bent on avenging the death of Agrippina. Elated by this adhesion of the commander of the Praetorian forces, and his reiterated assurances of success, nothing was now talked of in their gatherings but the time and place of execution. It is said that Subrius Flavius proposed that they should boldly fall on the despicable tyrant while exhibiting his vocal powers on the stage ; or set fire to that palace which he had built from the ruins of his country, and murder him during the confusion, and while unprotected by his guards. Both proposals were received with enthusiasm ; but that desire of surviving to share in the triumph, ever fatal to great attempts, proved also fatal to this.*

Meantime, while the leaders were resolving, adopting and rejecting plans, and hastening or putting off, as hope or apprehension alternately prevailed, a female, named Epicharis, who had been a slave, and never before that occasion very remarkable for honourable pursuits, began to rouse the conspirators, and to upbraid their cowardly hesitation. At last, as if out of patience with their temporizing, and finding herself in the voluptuous regions, round the bay of Naples, on her own affairs, she determined to try and make a beginning herself, by tampering with the commanders of the fleet. Among others she happened to light on the chiliarch Subrius Flavius, who considered himself as very ill-requited for his services

* " *Nisi impunitatis cupido retinuisse, magnis semper conatibus adversa.*"—*Ann. l. xv. 50.*

in murdering the emperor's mother. Having ascertained from the harlot almost every thing, except the names of her accomplices, Subrius hastened with the information to Nero ; but Epicharis, on being apprehended and confronted with the informer, succeeded in baffling every attempt to come at the truth. However, she was held in prison. Alarmed at this critical posture of affairs, the majority of the chiefs were for despatching Nero at once, during a grand entertainment to be given him by Piso, at a villa of his, in which Nero greatly delighted ; but to this Piso objected, as a sacrilege against the hospitable deities, and because it would throw the game into the hands of his rival, Lucius Silanus, who being in possession of the capitol, would reap all the advantages of the assassination, and probably get himself proclaimed emperor at their cost.

At last, having decided to make the attempt during the Circusian games, in honour of the goddess Ceres, it was arranged that Lateranus, on account of his great physical strength and courage, having embraced the emperor's knees, as if in urging some petition, should overthrow him, and that while thus held down, the officers and the others, according to the best of their abilities, should fall upon and dispatch him. Scevinus implored that *he* might be placed in the van, as he was in possession of a dagger which he had carried off from a temple in Etruria, or, as others say, from the shrine of Fortuna, at Ferentinum, and which he wore as a weapon, predestined by the Fates for some stupendous exploit. It was by the bravadoing of this sot that the affair got wind ; and, that a conspiracy of such immense hazard should have remained a secret so long, although known to numbers of all orders, ages, and sexes, rich and poor, is truly wonderful. After conferring at great length with Antonius Natalis, Scevinus came home on the eve of the day that was to be fatal to Nero ; and, with all due formality, first of all made his will ; then, unsheathing the aforesaid dagger, began to curse its rusty point,

and handing it to his freedman, Milicho, bade him go whet it on a rock till it was sharp as lightning. Then, having dined more sumptuously than was his wont, he gave their liberty to some of his slaves, to others sums of money, and, with a rueful expression of face and a perturbation of mind, but ill-disguised by the levity of his discourse, gave orders for bandages and other matters for staunching wounds, to the same Milicho. It is the general belief that it was by calculating on these proceedings, and not from any previous knowledge of the fact, that the slave began to suspect what was brewing; and having taken counsel with his wife, she not only confirmed his suspicions, but so worked upon his cowardice and cupidity, that the morning had hardly dawned, when his master was apprehended on his information. Soon after him they seized Natalis, who was the first to turn traitor, impeaching both his friend Piso and Annæus Seneca, against whom he knew that Nero was most greedy of an excuse for gratifying his hatred. On hearing this, Scevinus out with all the rest, amongst whom Lucan, Quintianus, and Senecio, held out for a long while; but after, on a promise of pardon, they endeavoured to atone for this delay, Lucan by denouncing his own mother, Atillia; Quintianus and Senecio by betraying each his bosom friend.

These occurrences reminded Nero of Epicharis, and, thinking that her delicate frame would easily yield to torture, he ordered her to be lacerated with torments.* But neither stripes, nor tortures by fire, nor all the exasperated cruelty of the lictors—maddened at being foiled by a feeble woman—could wring the secret from her; and when they were carrying her out to the place of torture the second day, all her limbs having been dislocated and disabled on the first, she took off a bandage from her breast, and, fastening one end to the top of the litter, and the other round her neck, threw herself out, and thus contrived to end her life:

* “*Tormentis delacerari jubet.*”—*Ubi supra*, cap. 57.

"affording thereby," says Tacitus, "an illustrious example of heroism, at a crisis when high born men, knights and Roman senators, vied with each other in yielding, to torture and death, their nearest friends and kindred."

The whole city was as in a state of siege ; the walls guarded, and no one allowed, without most rigid scrutiny, to approach either by sea or land ; while the forums and streets were scoured in every direction by horse and foot, and by German troopers, in particular, on whom, as being foreigners, the tyrant placed his chief reliance. To have exchanged civilities with any of the conspirators even by a passing word, or nod of recognition ; to have been seen with any of them at theatre or banquet was enough ; and more cruel and eager in the bloody work, than either Tigellinus or Nero himself, was the praetorian commander Fenius Rufus, evidently bent on getting rid of all who could convict him ; and it was by him Subrius Flavius was restrained from plunging his sword into Nero, while presiding at the torture and execution of his accomplices. It was this Flavius who said, on being questioned by Nero, while he was under torture, why he had forgotten his oath as a soldier : "Never," said he, "was praetorian more devoted to his emperor than I to you, while you deserved my loyalty ; but I began to execrate you, from the time, that having murdered your mother and your spouse, you turned charioteer, buffoon, and incendiary."

Piso, Plautius Lateranus, Seneca, Fenius Rufus, Vestinus, who was consul with Nerva, Senecio, Quintianus, Scevinus, and Lucanus were all tortured and put to death : most of them after having rendered their memories infamous by the betrayal of the most sacred pledges of friendship and kindred : some of them, like Seneca, who encouraged his wife to commit suicide, that he might have company in distress, and Lucan, who betrayed his mother, endeavouring to make their exit with a flourish, by a libation to

“ Jove the liberator,” or by reciting some bombastic verse.*

“ Meanwhile,” continues Tacitus, “ the city was filled with funerals, the Capitol with sacrifices of thanksgiving to the gods, some in gratitude for having their sons, others for having their brothers, their friends, or kindred among the victims of the tyrant’s vengeance. The houses his wrath had visited might be known by the laurel leaves and garlands around their portals. Fathers embraced the knees of him who had left them childless, and devoured the hand with fawning caresses that was dripping with their own blood.

“ As to the senate, they voted hecatombs and thanksgivings to the immortal gods, with special honours to the sun, (to which, from of old, there had stood a temple near the spot in the Circus fixed on by the conspirators,) as if the detection of the plot were due, in a marked degree, to that bright deity; that the games in honour of Ceres should be celebrated with a greater number of horse races than usual; that the month of April should, for the future, be called after Nero; and that a temple should be built to safety, in the place from which Scevinus had taken the dagger. That weapon itself, Nero had consecrated with his own hand in the capitoline temple, inscribing it to ‘ Jove the avenger.’ I find in the reports of the senate,” concludes the historian, “ that Cereales Anicius, consul-elect, proposed that a temple should be erected at the public expense, and with as little delay as possible, to the divine Nero.”—“ Reperio in commentariis senatūs, Cerealem Anicium, consulm designatum, pro sententiā dixisse, ut templum D. Neroni quam maturrime publicā pecuniā poneretur.”†

* Ubi supra, cap. 64 & 70.

† Annalium, l. xv. 74.

CHAPTER XXII.

“ Time ! the corrector where our judgments err,
The test of truth, love,—sole philosopher ;
For all besides are sophists, from thy thirst,
Which never loses though it doth defer—

Time, the avenger ! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift.”

—“ Ubique domus, ubique populus, ubique respublica, ubique
vita ; summum testimonium fræquentiae hujusmodi, onerosi sumus
mundo.”—*Tertul. de Anima*, xxx.

NEVER, perhaps, had imperial Rome appeared so magnificent and mighty as when Pudens looked out upon it, a moment before sunrise, from the Tarpeian tower. The contour of each of its ten thousand statues, every architectural member, and line, and ornament of its countless temples, baths, palaces, porticoes, theatres, arches of triumph, rostral pillars, trophies, down almost to the details of the reliefs and bronze inscriptions, appeared as if in Phidean newness under the pellucid dawn—a medium between moonlight and noon-day brilliancy ; and from the line of argent light defining each peak and undulation along the hills over Tibur, Preneste, and Tusculum, to the Alban mountain, down to where the Tyrrhenean sea glistened like a silver mirror between the Ostian shore and the horizon, nothing could the eye behold but one vast scene of marble wonders, villas interspersed with groves and terraced gardens, temple joined to theatre, palace to bath and hippodrome, by composite or Corinthian porticoes ; and city so blended with suburb, as to leave no trace of where the one began or the other ended. And from all this scene, there rose a din of joyous and proud existence. Myriads came pouring along the highways. The gates were too narrow to admit the throngs. Multitudes decked

out in gala dress, the meanest in snow white togas, crowded not only the streets and the forum, but swarmed on the roofs and clung to every pillar, and pediment, and vantage point on arch and trophy, round the grand scene of interest.

—“ Roofs, balustrades, and windows
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges horsed
With variable complexions ; all agreeing
In eagerness to see.” —

The citizens, according to their tribes, robed in white and crowned with laurel, occupied the centre of the forum, the flamens in their laticlaves, the salii with their shields, the corybantes, and all the colleges of augurs, haruspices, pontiffs, and vestal virgins, stood under the porticos of their temples ; the matrons of Rome with their patrician daughters, decked in jewellery and looking like Cyprian goddesses, were ranged along the galleries above the colonnades ; the knights and senators stood round the marble platform or rostrum in robes of state ; and all, as if with one voice, from the precincts of the throne to the distant roofs and towers and pinnacles of the seven-hilled city, burst forth into loud “ salves ” and acclamations as the summer sun bounded up over the Sabine mountains ; for at that instant, Rome’s emperor sat upon his throne embowered in standards and spoils of a thousand triumphs. The helmets and furbished arms of the cohorts glanced in the morning beams, and peals of martial music went echoing to the cloudless sky and along the Tiber.

It was a proud day even for Rome. Invaded and crushed on their own wild deserts, that never knew a conqueror before, the most dreaded and haughty of her enemies, the fierce hordes of Scythia, were now prostrate before her under the shadow of the Palatine. While the revolted Britons were made to feel the weight of Roman vengeance on one verge of the known world, the fame of Sylla and of Pompey was rivalled, if not surpassed, by Corbulo, in a career of conquest

beyond the Euphrates, and the passes of the Caucasus.* And there came Tiridates, of the proud lineage of the Arsacidæ, a king, the son, the brother, and the sire of kings, led like a suppliant and a captive, with his queen and the royal offspring of three Scythian monarchs as hostages, to pay abject homage to the world's lord, and to implore a sceptre and dominion at his feet, moving in slow procession, with suppliant bearing,—but still surrounded and escorted with all the pageantry of Asiatic royalty. When they had passed along the ranks of the Prætorian guards, and were arrived before the rostrum and the throne where Nero sat, they all fell prostrate on the earth. At this there rose a shout, clangouring with the memory of seven centuries of conquest; and so hoarse, as if for blood, that the Scythian princes, even the stern Tiridates, turned pale and trembled, till silence was proclaimed again. "Perhaps this," says the historian, "was an artifice of the barbarian to flatter Roman arrogance. After proclaiming his descent from the royal stock of the Arsacidæ, and that he was brother to Volugesus and Pocorus, who reigned over the Scythians, he professed himself the slave of Nero, whom he venerated, equally with Mithra, as a god; that, of himself he had nothing, neither kingdom nor authority, but through the Roman emperor — the

* See Tacit. Ann. l. xiv. from 31st to 39th chapter, for the history of the British rebellion. In the last battle, the Britons lost 80,000 and their queen; the Romans only forty soldiers. Pestilence and famine carried off those whom the sword had spared. Afghanistan is not more desolate now than Kent, and Surrey, and Oxfordshire were then: "quodque nationum ambiguum aut adversum fuerat, igni atque ferro vastatur." The thirty-two first chapters of the fifteenth book give vivid scenes from the Parthian war. The reader is sometimes inclined to think he is perusing a Latin version of the Indian news. The Romans had their Jelalabad, their Cabool disasters, their Kyber Pass, and their revenge, two thousand years ago.

— "Se Arsacidarum sanguine ortum professus est, Volugesi et Pacori regum fratrem, servum Neronis, quem ut deum æque, ac Mithram, venerabatur." — *Ubi supra*, cap. xl. *Suppl. auct. Gabr. Brotier.*

supreme arbiter of his destiny and fortune." When these protestations were interpreted, and proclaimed by sound of trumpet to the Roman people, new plaudits and acclamations followed.

"Know," replied the emperor, "that to have journeyed hither with all the pomp and dependencies of your rank was but your duty; that, in person, and not by any embassy, you might venerate my presence. As to realms and kingly privileges, know that they are not thine because bequeathed to you by your sire, or because preserved by Scythian valour, but because it is my will that you shall reign." Again the Scythian was prostrate before the successor of the Cæsars, and the seven hills and the Campus Martius resounded with the shout of the patricians, the knights, the legions, and the Roman people, as Nero placed a diadem on his vassal's brow, and said:—"I give thee to Armenia for her king. Be it known to thee and to all mortals, that it is mine to give kingdoms, and to take them away!"*

* "Quanto demissius hæc fuerant dicta (a Tiridate) tanto ferocius respondit Nero. Hac quidem merito venisti, ut præsens præsente me fruerere. Jura, nec a patre reicta, nec a fratribus, licet dedita, servata, a me accepta habeto. Te regem Armenie do. Tu vosque omnes, me regna dare et adimere intelligite!"—*Tacit. Annal. lib. xvi. 41. Suppl. auct. Gabr. Brotier.*

BOOK III.

“Vera sententia est: ‘Omnia orta occidunt, et aucta senescunt.’
Quis crederet ut totius orbis exstructa victoriis Roma corrueret;
ut ipsa suis populis, et mater fieret et sepulchrum?”—*S. Hieron.*
in Ezech. Proph. Proleg. l. iii.

CHAPTER I.

“ She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb’d the capitol ; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site.”

Childe Harold, cant. iv.

“ Cur igitur et Camillus dolorer, si hæc post trecentos et quinquaginta annos eventura putaret, et ego doleam, si ad decem millia annorum gentem aliquam urbe nostra potitaram patem.”—
M. T. Cicero, Tusc. Quæst. lib. i. 28.

“ **TOTILA**, the Goth,” says Procopius, (who served in the staff of Belisarius, and was his secretary,) “ determined to level Rome with the ground, and make the regions where it stood a place of pasture for flocks and herds.” Preparations were made to overturn the monuments and trophies that still survived so many ravages, and to destroy the palaces and temples by fire. These he spared, at the instance of an embassy sent by Belisarius, from where he lay with the forces of the Greek emperor at Ostia ; but the walls he caused to be in great part demolished, and carried away as captives the miserable remnant of the senate and the Roman people, with their wives and children. He suffered no one to remain behind, so that the city was a perfect solitude. The Chronicle of Marcellinus adds, that for forty days and upwards Rome had no inhabitants but wild beasts and birds of prey. It was towards the close of this interval, that Belisarius felt a desire to visit and survey with his own eyes the ruins of a place that had been the theatre of so much grandeur and renown ; and, with this view, he sallied forth from the sea-port at the head of a strong squadron of his guards.

A marble wilderness extended on every side, as far as the eye could reach, strewed with the ruins of Vitruvian villas, temples, and aqueducts ; the waste

water of the latter had filled all the valleys and overflowed the low grounds of the Campagna, converting into marshes and mantling pools, those regions which, ere while, had abounded with all the delights of the Hesperides. The thoroughfares of the nations were silent and lonely as the double line of tombs through which they passed. The towers and inscriptions over the gates had been torn down, and their bronze portals carried off in the plunder train of the barbarian. The rock-built walls of Rome lay low; and the tramp of their war horses was muffled by the grass, as Belisarius and his troops rode under a succession of dismantled arches, down towards the forum, along the “sacred way.”

The fox looked out from the casements of the Palatine, and barked sharply at the intruders as they rode on; wolves prowled through the vacant streets, or littered in the palace halls; wild dogs hunted, in packs, through the great circus, through the baths, along the Campus Martius, and on to the gardens of Sallust and Mæcenas, through the promenades of the Suburra. Outlandish beasts—as if escaped from the menageries and keeps of the amphitheatres—lay sleeping and enjoying themselves in the sunshine of the porticos, or tore one another to pieces, as the factions had done of old, around the rostrum, and in the assembly-place of the people; others growled and snarled, and gloated over the unburied carcasses and whitening skeletons of the dead. Ravens and vultures desisted from feeding their sanguinary nestlings, to hoot the warriors, as they wound slowly among the prostrate columns and entablatures of temples that encumbered the ascent to the capitol, or, starting from their perching-places on trophy and triumphal arch, hovered, and flapped their sable wings above the plumage of their helmets. Once more, the Roman eagle soars above the Tarpeian tower—that eyry from whence, for a thousand years, it had flown forth to carnage; and the martial bugle makes the field of Mars resound again. But instead of the warlike re-

sponse of legions—clamouring to be led against the Samnite or the Parthian—there broke out a hideous medley of yells and howling, yelp, bark, and roar, out-topped by the shrill cries of ill-omened birds, startled from their roosts in the sanctuary recesses, and from the niches and cornices of the senate-house. The warriors listened for some human sound. In vain they listened, and listened again ! There was the Palatine, the forum, the capitol, the Campus Martius, and the Tiber, flowing under the beauteous summer sky beneath the Tarpeian cliff—but the legions, the emperors, the senate, and the Roman people, where were they ?

When that savage uproar had at last subsided, save a casual outbreak of a howl or bark reverberating dismally among the ruins, and along the valleys and the river banks, all, within the boundaries of the seven hills, was again as silent as the grave !

Never had mortal eye beheld a catastrophe more impressive. Fortune had turned back upon her steps, and made it her sport to reverse every thing, upon that very scene, where, beyond all others, men had become elated with imagining, that she had, at length, descended from her slippery globe, for ever, and fixed her perpetual sojourn. But it would seem as if she had lured the Romans to the highest pinnacle of grandeur and felicity, only to render their downfall the more tremendous—had helped them to build up testimonials of boundless empire, and to stamp a character of eternity upon their works, merely that the vouchers of her own instability might endure for ever.

After being deified by the prostrate earth, and having temples, and priests, and altars, consecrated for their worship, the emperors of Rome were led about as harlequins, to grace the triumph and contribute mirth to the carousals of the Goths. The iron legions, that had trodden down the nations, had been trodden down in their turn. The slave had seen his tyrant lord a suppliant at his feet for life ; at his gate for bread ; to escape from dignities for which the Gracchi, the

Scipios, and the Cæsars had contended, men of patrician lineage had themselves branded and ranked as slaves. To be a Roman, once a distinction prouder than that of royalty, had become the vilest badge of infamy.* The lords of palaces that resembled cities, and of estates that included kingdoms within their limits, saw themselves without a home or a rood of land. “In this revolution, the sons and daughters of Roman consuls tasted the misery which they had so often spurned or relieved, wandered in tattered garments through the streets of the city, and begged for the most sordid pittance, perhaps without success, before the gates of their hereditary mansions;”† others expired of famine upon silken couches, amid halls of more than regal splendour, or were led away (a lot still more insupportable) to minister to the rude conquerors, amid devastated villas and gardens that reminded them of many a bright summer time passed in dalliance and enjoyment. To the very west, the Fates had unravelled their most gorgeous tissue, and, from the ruins of the Palatine and the capitol, had abandoned the fame of kings, consuls, and emperors, to the scoffing winds.

Even the memorials of her ancient glories served, and that not a little, to multiply and increase the calamities of Rome. The sight of them infuriated the barbarians. They made it a sacred duty to slaughter the craven multitudes they found loitering round, and boasting alliance with monuments, intended to perpetuate the memory of the injuries and insults inflicted by their sires upon humanity; and it would seem as if so many millions had been gathered into one place, by allurements of largesses, shows, and every

* “When we would brand an enemy,” says Luitprandus, “with the most disgraceful and contumelious appellation, we call him ‘a Roman.’”—“Hoc solo, id est, Romani nomine, quicquid ignobilis, quicquid timidatis, quicquid avaritiae, quicquid luxuriæ, quicquid mendacii, immo quicquid vitiorum est comprehendentis.”—*Luitprand. Ligitio ap. Muratori Scrip. Itilic.* vol. ii. pars i. p. 481.

† Gibbon, from Procopius.

sensual indulgence, that the scythe of the destroyer might mow them down with the greater facility and expedition. The metropolis of the nations had become their sepulchre ; and the soil of their pampered bodies fattened and almost filled up the valleys of the seven hills.

Nor were the barbarians satisfied with wreaking vengeance on the descendants and heirs of the old race of aggressors. They aimed at the annihilation of whatever could perpetuate the memory of their triumphs, and of their own disasters and past humiliations—of every thing in fine that art or conventional usage had impressed with that execrated Roman name. A variety of circumstances assisted their endeavours, at least, with respect to the architectural wonders of the city.

In the panegyrics of her last admirers we may trace the gradual progression of decay.* The private palaces, which are celebrated by Olympiodorus, have no encomium from the poet who survived the ravage of Genseric, and who still extols the baths of Agrippa, of Nero, and of Diocletian. The care and admiration of Theodoric were directed to those objects whose solidity or whose position protected them from sudden dissolution, but which were still shaken by violence and age. Cassiodorus confesses that his master, a lover of architecture, a restorer of cities, could only prop up, and keep from tumbling into ruin, the tottering remnants of antiquity. He owns, also, the partial abandonment, whilst he laments the rapid decay of the ancient habitations. In the interval between the encomiums of Cassiodorus and the notices which Procopius has left of the miracles of Rome, the aqueducts had been broken, the thermæ, the amphitheatres, the theatres, had all been abandoned, and the admiration of the historian is confined to the tomb of Hadrian, to the infinite number of statues, the works of Phidias, Lysippus, and Miron, that adorned

* See Hobhouse's Illustrations of the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold.

it, and to the solicitude with which the Romans preserved as much as possible the more stable edifices of their city, and, amongst other objects, the galley in which their Trojan ancestor, *Æneas*, had first explored the Tiber. But even these few detached ornaments must have been much diminished, especially during the successive Gothic sieges. In defending the Mole of Hadrian against the assaults of Vitiges, the Greek soldiers broke the Phidian statues that stood in close array round its terraces, and hurled them down upon the Goths ; and it may be well imagined that whatever came first to hand, or was most contiguous to the breach to be filled up, was seized and made use of without scruple, when the walls were hastily repaired by Belisarius, at the time that Vitiges was pouring down to beleaguer the almost defenceless city ; as well as when he had, in a great measure, to rebuild them, before Totila came to besiege it a second time.

But we have proofs of how ruin and devastation worked upon the queen of cities at a much earlier date. An edict of Majorian specifies as a common offence, that those who built or repaired houses had recourse to the most magnificent erections of their ancestors for materials.

“ The decay of the city,” says Gibbon, (speaking of the century previous to the time of which we write,) “ had gradually impaired the value of the public works. The circus and theatres might still excite, but they seldom gratified the desires of the people ; the temples were no longer inhabited by gods or men ; the diminished crowds of the Romans were lost in the immense space of their baths and porticos ; and the stately libraries and halls of justice became useless to an indolent generation. The monuments of consular, or imperial greatness, were no longer revered, as the immortal glory of the capitol : they were only esteemed as an inexhaustible mine of materials, cheaper and more convenient than the distant quarry. The fairest forms of architecture were rudely defaced for the sake of some paltry or pretended repairs.”

Still earlier again than this, the removal of the seat of empire to the shores of the Bosphorus had contributed to the work of devastation. “Statues, columns, ornaments in bronze and gold,” says Denina,* “were taken from Rome in great quantity, and transported to Constantinople; and many of the patrician palaces were stripped of their embellishments, and even of their marbles, by their noble owners, attracted to the new capital by the court and the favours of the prince.”

These, however, were but mere external injuries. It was during the century and a half from Alaric to Totila, who put the last hand to the work of destruction, that ruin ate its way into, and dissolved, the very skeleton of the city. An act read in the senate, so early as the year 376, forbids the custom of quarrying up the substructures of “noble edifices,” of carrying slabs and columns of marble from the public buildings, and from otherwise despoiling them. Ten years earlier, we find the attention and activity of the prefect Lampridius directed against those who occupied themselves in stripping away the lead from the roofs, and extracting the ornaments and fastenings of brass and iron from the deserted buildings.

“This rapine,” says Hobhouse, “supposes a solitude. In the subsequent periods of distress, when every precious object had been removed from above ground, the plunderers searched for subterranean treasures, and tore up the lead of the conduits.” The mere necessities of existence became the only care of the wretched descendants of the once lordly people; and even if they had the means of preserving the monuments of by-gone pride and conquest, they could hardly have felt much zeal to do so, seeing that the sight of them only contributed to aggravate and embitter their own reverses. They also exasperated their barbarian conquerors, who looked upon themselves as sent to execute the sentence of Divine retribution upon pagan Rome.

* L. iii. cap. 6.

At the second siege of Totila, there was so much cultivated land within the walls, that Diogenes, the Greek governor, thought the corn he had sown would be sufficient to supply the garrison and citizens in a protracted defence. As to the suburban regions, once so beautiful and full of life and gaiety—from the shores of Ostia to the ridges of the Alban and Sabine hills—they were now a solitude, hideous, and sad to look upon, as a battle field of giants ; where myriads of the slain have been left to rot and bleach under the torrid sun.

CHAPTER II.

“ The Niobe of nations ! there she stands
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe.”

Childe Harold, cant. iv.

“ Quid salvum est si Roma perit ?”

S. Hieron. Ep. xi. ad Ageruchiam.

WHEN Rome was in the meridian of her pride, she beheld herself reflected in each of the innumerable cities that studded the shores of the seas, the river sides, and lay scattered, like marble villas near some great capital, over every province within the frontiers. From Gades to Edessa, and from Camelodunum and London to the cities of Mauritania and the Pyramids, the arts, the fashions which she patronized, her literature, and all the elegancies of social existence, had spread their influence. In that epoch, as Rome resembled a boundless palace—prepared for the reception and amusement of the aristocracy of the whole world—rather than a city, so did the provinces resemble one vast pleasure ground, where the most polished and voluptuous nations had yielded themselves without restraint to the pursuit and enjoyment of felicity.

This resemblance and sympathy between the handmaids and their queen did not terminate with the reign of prosperity. The savage and sanguinary hordes that had been accumulating in irresistible force, and amassing the traditions of revenge against those who had so long invaded and insulted them, had long ago burst forth from the fastnesses of the north, and not only forded the Ister, and the Rhine, and stormed the Alps, but established themselves, permanently, among the solitudes they had made over the fairest provinces, and even in the very heart of

Italy. The legions were annihilated; some fugitives in the mountains and in the islets of the sea, or a few spectral forms, sitting motionless, or gliding, among the ruins of palaces and temples, in search of some herbs to feed upon, were all that had escaped the ravages of the barbarians. The aspect of the empire, like the city itself, was that of a marble wilderness, or presented such a scene as Palmyra presents to-day. The hunters of the north pursued their wild sports, and the nomad tribes of Scythia bivouacked among the solitudes of ruined cities. They pastured their sheep and cattle where the gardens, and lawns, and parterres of villas might still be traced.

“ The sudden and short excursions in quest of booty,” says Robertson, “ which had alarmed and disquieted the empire, ceased. A more dreadful calamity impended. Great bodies of armed men, with their wives, and children, and slaves, and flocks, issued forth like regular colonies in quest of new settlements. People who had no cities, and seldom any fixed habitation, were so little attached to their native soil, that they migrated without reluctance from one place to another. New adventurers followed them. The lands which they deserted were occupied by more remote tribes of barbarians. These, in their turn, pushed forward into more fertile countries, and, like a torrent continually increasing, rolled on, and swept every thing before them. In less than two centuries from their first irruption, barbarians of various names and lineage plundered and took possession of Thrace, Pannonia, Gaul, Spain, Africa, and at last of Italy. The vast fabric of the Roman power, which it had been the work of ages to perfect, was in that short period overturned from the foundation.”*

“ Civilized nations carry on their hostilities with so little rancour or animosity, that war among them is disarmed of half its terrors. Barbarians rush into

* Robertson’s View of the State of Europe, p. 6, et seq.

war with impetuosity, and prosecute it with violence. Their sole object is to make their enemies feel the weight of their vengeance; nor does their rage subside until it is satiated with inflicting on them every possible calamity.

“They boast,” says Ammianus Marcellinus, a contemporary author, and one of the best of the late historians; “they boast, with the utmost exultation, of the number of enemies whom they have slain, and, as the most glorious of all ornaments, they fasten the scalps of those who have fallen by their hands to the trappings of their horses; wherever they marched, their route was marked with blood. They ravaged or destroyed all around them. They spared no age, or sex, or rank; what escaped the fury of the first inundation, perished in those which followed it. The most fertile and populous provinces were converted into deserts, in which were scattered the ruins of villages and cities, that afforded shelter to a few miserable inhabitants whom chance had preserved, or the sword of the enemy, wearied with destroying, had spared. The conquerors who first settled in the countries which they had wasted, were expelled or exterminated by new invaders, who coming from regions farther removed from the civilized parts of the world, were still more fierce and rapacious. This brought fresh calamities upon mankind, which did not cease until the north by pouring forth successive swarms was drained of people, and could no longer furnish instruments of destruction. Famine and pestilence, which always march in the train of war, raged in every part of Europe, and completed its sufferings.”

GAUL.

“A multitude of barbarous nations,” says St. Jerome, “have possessed themselves of all Gaul. The Quadi, the Vandals, the Sarmatians, the Alans, the Gepidi, the Heruli, the Saxons, the Burgundians, the Suevi, and the Huns, have laid waste the whole coun-

try between the Alps and the Pyrenees, between the ocean and the Rhine.”*

“ The greatest part of the Gallic cities were besieged and stormed by the Huns, who practised, in the example of Metz, their customary maxims of war. They involved every age, sex, and profession in promiscuous massacre ; the flourishing city was delivered to the flames, and a solitary chapel of St. Stephen marked the place where it formerly stood.”†

SPAIN.

“ The situation of Spain, separated on all sides from the enemies of Rome, by the sea, by the mountains, and by the intermediate provinces, had secured the long tranquillity of that remote and sequestered country ; and we may observe, as a sure symptom of domestic happiness, that in a period of four hundred years, Spain furnished very few materials to the history of the Roman empire. The footsteps of the barbarians, who in the reign of Gallienus had penetrated beyond the Pyrenees, were soon obliterated by the return of peace ; and, in the fourth century, the cities of Emerita or Merida, of Corduba, Seville, Bracara and Tarragona, were numbered with the most illustrious of the Roman world. The various productions of the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral kingdoms, were improved and manufactured by the skill of an industrious people, and the peculiar advantages of naval stores contributed to support an extensive and profitable trade. The arts and sciences flourished under the protection of the emperors.” But the misfortunes of Spain may be best described in the language of its most eloquent historian.

“ The irruption of the Suevi, Vandals, and Alans was followed,” says Mariana,‡ “ by the most dreadful calamities ; as the barbarians exercised their

* S. Hieron. Epist. xi. ad Ager., and Ep. xxxv. ad Heliodor.

† See Gibbon, ch. xxxv.

‡ Mariana de Reb. Hisp. l. v. c. i. tom. i. p. 148. A.D. 409.

indiscriminate cruelty on the fortunes of the Romans and the Spaniards, and ravaged with equal fury the cities and the open country. The progress of famine reduced the miserable inhabitants to feed on the flesh of their fellow-creatures ; and even the wild beasts, who multiplied without control, in the desert, were exasperated by the taste of blood and the impatience of hunger, boldly to attack and devour their human prey. Pestilence soon appeared, the inseparable companion of famine ; a large portion of the people was swept away, and the groans of the dying excited only the envy of their surviving friends."

AFRICA, A.D. 429.*

" The long and narrow tract of the African coast was filled with frequent monuments of Roman art and magnificence, and the respective degrees of improvement might be accurately measured by the distance from Carthage and the Mediterranean. A simple reflection will impress every thinking mind with the clearest idea of fertility and cultivation. The country was extremely populous ; the inhabitants reserved a liberal subsistence for their own use, and the annual exportation, particularly of wheat, was so regular and plentiful, that Africa deserved the name of the common granary of Rome and of mankind. On a sudden, the fruitful provinces from Tangier to Tripoli were overwhelmed by the invasion of the Vandals." " They found a province well cultivated," says Victor Vitensis, a contemporary author,† " a country enjoying plenty, the beauty of the whole earth. They carried their destructive armies into every corner of it ; they dispeopled it by their devastations, exterminating every thing with fire and sword. They did not even spare the vines and fruit trees, that those to whom caves and inaccessible mountains had afforded a re-

* Gibbon, vol. iv. c. xxxiii. p. 226.

† De Persecut. Afric. Bib. Pat. v. 8. p. 666.

treat, might find no nourishment of any kind. Their hostile rage could not be satiated, and there was no place exempted from the effects of it. They tortured their prisoners with the most exquisite cruelty, that they might force from them a discovery of their hidden treasures. The more they discovered the more they expected, and the more implacable they became. Neither the infirmities of age nor of sex, neither the dignity of nobility, nor the sanctity of the sacerdotal office, could mitigate their fury; but the more illustrious their prisoners the more barbarously they insulted them. The public buildings which resisted the violence of the flames they levelled with the ground. They left many cities without an inhabitant. When they approached any fortified place, which their undisciplined army could not reduce, they gathered together a multitude of prisoners, and putting them to the sword, left their bodies unburied, that the stench of their carcasses might oblige the garrison to abandon it."

St. Augustine, an African, who survived the conquest of his country by the Vandals some years, gives a similar description of their cruelties.*

About a hundred years after the settlement of the Vandals in Africa, Belisarius led an expedition from Constantinople against them, when another war of extermination ensued, from which the teeming provinces of that land have never since recovered. Procopius, who took an active part in the scenes which he describes, represents that immense country, three times the extent of France, as reduced to solitude. "Africa," says he, "was so entirely dispeopled, that one might travel several days in it without meeting one man; and it is no exaggeration to say, that in the course of the war five millions of persons perished."†

* Vol. x. p. 372, edit. 1616.

† Procop. de Bel. Vandal. l. i. c. 5.; l. ii. c. 28.; et Hist. Arcan. xviii. ap. Byzan. Scrip. 315.

ATTICA.

“ The whole territory of Attica, from the promontory of Sunium to the town of Megara, was blasted by the baleful presence of the Goths ; and if we may use the comparison of a contemporary philosopher, ‘ Athens itself resembled the bleeding and empty skin of a slaughtered victim.’ ”*

ILLYRICUM.

“ The whole breadth of Europe, as it extends above five hundred miles from the Euxine to the Adriatic, was at once invaded,” says Gibbon, “ and occupied and desolated by the myriads of barbarians whom Attila led into the field.”† “ For twenty years and more,” writes St. Jerome, “ from Constantinople to the Julian Alps, we behold the daily effusion of the Roman blood—every where groans and lamentations ; everywhere death appears in various shapes. The whole Roman empire is tumbling.”§ “ Thrace, the best cultivated province of that quarter of the empire, was converted into a desert ; and when Priscus accompanied the ambassadors sent to Attila, there were no inhabitants in some of the cities, but a few miserable people who had taken shelter among the ruins ; and the fields were covered with the bones of those who had fallen by the sword.”||

THE RHENISH PROVINCES.

“ The banks of the Rhine, like those of the Tiber, were crowned with elegant houses and well cultivated

* Gibbon’s Hist. of Dec. and Fall, c. xxx. vol. iv. p. 33.

† For the desolation of Africa, see also the letter of Capriolus, Bishop of Carthage, to excuse his absence from the Council of Ephesus. Apud Ruinart, p. 429.

‡ Chap. xxxiv. vol. iv. p. 248.

§ Ep. ad Heliodor.

|| Priscus, apud Byzan. Scrip. i. 34, quoted by Robertson. State of Europe, &c., p. 242.

farms ; and if a poet descended the river, he might express his doubt on which side was situated the territory of the Romans.

—‘Geminasque viator
Cum videat ripas quæ sit Romana requirat.’

This scene of peace and plenty was suddenly changed into a desert, and the prospect of the smoking ruins could only distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man.”*

ITALY.

But the most fated victim of barbaric cupidity and rage was Italy. Italy, the seat of elegance and luxury, was cultivated to the highest pitch, and thickly studded with stately villas on every pleasant site, from the margin of the lake of Como to the orangeries of the voluptuous Tarentum ; and from Mantua to the shores of Baiæ and Neapolis. But so effectually did the devastation of the Barbarians destroy all the effects of Roman industry and cultivation, that in the eighth century a considerable part of Italy appears to have been covered with forests and marshes of great extent. Muratori enters into a minute detail concerning the situation and limits of several of these ; and proves, by the most authentic evidence, that great tracts of territory in all the different provinces of Italy, were either overrun with wood, or laid under water. Nor did these occupy parts of the country naturally barren or of little value, but were spread over districts which ancient writers represent as extremely fertile, and which at present are highly cultivated. Lands were granted (as to the first settlers of America) to those who would clear and reclaim

* Conringius has collected several passages from the ancient historians, which prove that the devastations committed by the Vandals and Huns in the countries situated on the banks of the Rhine were no less cruel and fatal to the human race than in Illyricum and Africa.—*Robertson*, note V. p. 243.

them ; as it is expressly stated in many of the charters granted to monasteries and individuals, that their title to their estates was that they had reclaimed them “ *ex eremo*.” Muratori adds, that during these ages, Italy was greatly infested with wolves and other wild beasts ; another mark of its being destitute of inhabitants. Thus the pride of the ancient world for its fertility and cultivation, was reduced to the state of a country newly discovered and rendered habitable.

But the fairest tracts of Italy had been reduced to a wilderness from a much earlier date. A touching and lively picture of the desolate aspect of Bologna, Reggio, Modena, and Piacenza, with the rich interjacent provinces, is given by St. Ambrose even before the year 400. Pope Gelasius speaks of Tuscany, Emilia, and other provinces, in which the human species was almost extinct.

“ The whole extent of country between the Alps and the Danube,” says Sismondi, “ had been fertilized by Roman agriculture, and enriched by Roman commerce, and by the residence of the Roman legions ; it was looked upon as the nursery of the best soldiers of the empire. But it had been so devastated by successive invasions that the race of its Roman inhabitants was nearly extinct, and was succeeded by barbarians of whose history nothing is known. The Rugians, who possessed it in the time of Odoacer, the first of the Gothic kings in Italy, were conquered by him and brought in great numbers into the latter country to assist in cultivating the deserts by which it was overspread. *Deserts they might truly be called.* The population had been swept away by every scourge under heaven ; war, plague, famine, public tyranny, and domestic slavery. Throughout the preceding century, the existence of the people had been entirely artificial. They were entirely supported by the contributions of corn which the emperors had bound themselves to contribute in Rome, Milan, and other great towns where the court resided. These largesses had ceased with the loss of Africa and the ruin of

Sicily. Meanwhile, most of the landed proprietors had ceased to cultivate their estates ; there was little encouragement to incur great expense in growing corn, which was afterwards given away in the market-place. The rearing of cattle had for a time superseded the cultivation of grain ; but both the herds, and slaves who tended them, had been carried off by continual incursions of the barbarians.”*

“ Above four years elapsed from the successful invasion of Italy by the arms of Alaric, to the voluntary retreat of the Goths under the conduct of his successor, Adolphus ; and during the whole time, they reigned without control over a country, which, in the opinion of the ancients, had united all the various excellences of nature and art. The fruits of a long peace perished under the rude grasp of the barbarians ; and they themselves were incapable of tasting the more elegant refinements of luxury, which had been prepared for the use of the soft and polished Italians. Each soldier, however, claimed an ample portion of the substantial plenty, the corn and cattle, oil and wine, that was daily collected and consumed in the Gothic camp, and the principal warriors insulted the villas and gardens, once inhabited by Lucullus and Cicero, along the beauteous coasts of Campania. Their trembling captives, the sons and daughters of Roman senators, presented in goblets of gold and gems, large draughts of Falernian wine to the haughty victors : who stretched their huge limbs under the shade of plane trees, artificially disposed to exclude the scorching rays, and to admit the genial warmth of the sun. These delights were enhanced by the memory of past hardships : the comparison of their native soil, the bleak and barren hills of Scythia, and the frozen banks of the Elbe and Danube, added new charms to the felicity of the Italian climate.”†

Devastating and merciless invaders did not cease

* Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. 1. p. 172 of *Cabinet Cyclo.* No. 56.

† Gibbon, c. xxxi. p. 141, 142.

to succeed each other, until Italy, the pride and miracle of ancient civilization, was reduced to a howling wilderness. Vast forests and thickets usurped the places of her once smiling and sunny gardens, and the waters of neglected canals and rivers choaked up with weeds, and of ruptured aqueducts, changed her fairest and most aromatic landscapes into marshes and stagnant lakes. A miserable remnant of her people, scattered thinly among the ruins of imperial cities and patrician villas, and in the most sequestered fastnesses of the mountains, lived in perpetual terror of the armies of wolves and other savage animals who roamed the open country—successors of the Barbarians.

Nought was to be descried but a boundless scene, as it were, of sepulchres, haunted by the ghastly spectres of the pride, and pomp, and pleasures, which had rioted and exulted there, in the day of power, before palaces had been converted into tombs ; before the purple of the patrician had become the corse's shroud, and the couch of dalliance its grave. To Belisarius, who claimed a hero's relation with the mightiest of Rome's children, it was like gazing on the murdered body of one well known and venerated even as a mother.

Commanding his guards to disperse and explore the ruins in every direction, he dismounted, and casting himself in an attitude expressive of his grief upon a broken pillar of the temple of Fortune, his thoughts reverted from the scene around him, to that which Rome had presented in the zenith of her grandeur, and ran over in reveries, but little marked by order, the dark catalogue of disasters, of which he beheld the consummation.*

* Vid. Muratori, *Antiquitat. Medii Aevi. Dis. xxi. V. 2. p. 149, 153, et 163.*

CHAPTER III.

“ But long before had Freedom’s face been veil’d,
And anarchy assumed her attributes ;
Till every lawless soldier who assail’d
Trod on the trembling senate’s slavish mutes.”

Childe Harold, cant. iv.

“ Opus aggredior opimum casibus, atrox praeliis, discors seditionibus, ipsa etiam pace sævum.”—*C. Tacit. Historiar.* l. i. 2.

No patriot, even of the pristine ages, ever made a greater display of respect for constitutional forms and the mere nomenclature of civil liberty, than Augustus did. He went the length of making a personal canvass for the consulship and other offices ; scrupulously practising all the duties of an ordinary candidate, at a time when his will was the law of the Roman world. But the mask of hypocrisy, which a cool head, an unfeeling heart, and a cowardly disposition, had prompted him to assume at nineteen, he never afterwards laid aside ; and, under the pretence of reforming the republic, he continued, with the aid of Mæcenas and Agrippa, to consolidate a military despotism.

During his own felicitous and protracted reign, no inconvenience arose from this ; for Augustus and his ministers understood how to restrain the armies by an image of civil government, as well as to amuse the people by an image of civil liberty. The prestige of the imperial authority, and of the name of Cæsar, under the skilful management of his successor Tiberius, was barely able, however, to confine the horrors with which this system was fraught, within the limits of the camps. When the throne was vacant by the murder of Caligula, who had succeeded Tiberius—hastened to his end by violence—the attempt of the senate to realize the prerogatives, of which it had the

name, served only to reveal where in reality the supreme authority resided. The consuls convoked the senate on the Capitol, condemned the memory of the Cæsars, gave the watch-word liberty to the few cohorts who faintly adhered to their standard, and during eight-and-forty hours acted as the independent chiefs of a free commonwealth. But while they deliberated, the Prætorian guards had resolved. However, any violent outbreak of military licence was prevented on that occasion by the prompt and abject submission of the representatives of civil power, to the choice of the legions.*

The death of Nero was like a signal to all the agencies of destruction to break loose at once. In the bloody wars, and tremendous pitched battles that ensued between the legions, to see which should elect the emperor, many smiling tracts even of Italy were devastated, many noble cities ruined; four pretenders to the empire perished by the sword, and the whole Roman world was shaken by the contending armies. But no attempt, or even inclination, to interfere in the election was manifested by either senate or people. The very reverse; while two mighty armies contended under their eyes for the possession of Rome itself, the citizens stood by as spectators, delighted, and exhibiting signs of applause, and of cold-blooded cruelty, which showed that they cared for the fate of the empire just as little as they would, which of two rival gladiators or charioteers might win a prize.

“The Roman people,” says Tacitus, “were present as spectators, while the whole line of the walls, (from the Flaminian to the Salarian gate,) was stormed by the Flavian legions, and defended by those of Vitellius. Now one side, now the other, was cheered on by their plaudits, regarding the scenes of carnage as a theatrical entertainment. If a wounded soldier withdrew from

* “It was not without reluctance and remorse, that the Prætorian guards had been persuaded to abandon the cause of the tyrant Nero. This idea is frequently and strongly inculcated by Tacitus: vid. *Hist. l. v. 16. ii. 76.*”—*Gibbon*, ch. iii. p. 89.

the fight, they pursued him to wherever he sought shelter, caused him to be dragged out and butchered. They stripped the slain ; and, while the combatants were too much absorbed in the sanguinary conflict to think of spoil, they made harvest of the plunder. ‘ *Sæva ac deformis urbe totâ facies.*’ The whole city wore a cruel and deformed aspect ; dancing and carousal went on side by side with havoc and groans of death ; harlots and their paramours disported themselves among the wounded and the slain ; all that is most unbridled in debauchery, and most heart-rending in war, were brought into odious proximity ; so that you would believe the city had gone mad, at one and the same time, with both lust and blood-thirstiness.”

Thus, by the profligacy of the Romans, was the supreme power abandoned, without regret, to a brutal soldiery, who were taught by the rapid downfall of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, to consider the emperors as the creatures of their will and the instruments of their licence.

Vespasian, the founder of the Flavian dynasty, was the grandson of a private soldier, and carried with him to the imperial throne the sordid disposition of a tax-gatherer, which he had inherited from his father. The woes predicted by our Lord and his apostles, as impending over the Jews, were inflicted through his instrumentality, and that of his son Titus, who rased Jerusalem to the ground. They carried with them in their triumphs the sacred emblems of the Temple, as we see by the reliefs upon the arch of Titus, remaining to the present day.

It was during the reign of Titus, which was very brief, that Mount Vesuvius suddenly burst forth, with a desolating fury that overwhelmed the voluptuous cities of Pompeii, Stabiæ, and Herculaneum, and changed the garden of Italy into a volcanic desert.

CHAPTER IV.

“Haustæ aut obute urbes, fecundissima Campaniæ ora.”—*C. Tacit. Histor. l. i. 2.*

“MANY huge men, surpassing human stature, such as the giants are described to have been, appeared wandering in the air and upon the earth, at one time frequenting the mountain, at another the fields and cities in its neighbourhood. Afterwards came great droughts and violent earthquakes, so that the whole plain boiled and bubbled, and the hills leapt, and there were noises under ground like thunder, and above ground like roaring, and the sea made a great noise, and the heavens sounded; and then suddenly a mighty crash was heard, as if the mountains were coming together, and first great stones were thrown up to the very summits, then mighty fires and immense smoke, so that the whole air was overshadowed, and the sun entirely hidden as in an eclipse.

“Thus day was turned into night, and light into darkness; and some thought the giants were rising again, (for many phantoms were seen in the smoke, and a blast as of trumpets, was heard,) while others believed that the earth was to return to chaos, or to be consumed by fire. Therefore men fled, some from the houses out into the ways, others that were without into their houses; some quitted the land for the sea, some the sea for the land, being confounded in mind, and thinking every place at a distance safer than where they were. Meanwhile an inexpressible quantity of dust was blown out, and filled land, sea, and air, which did much more mischief to men, fields, and cattle, and destroyed all the birds and fishes, and besides buried two entire cities—Hercula-

neum and Pompeii—*while the population were sitting in the theatre.*”

This is the account of the catastrophe, which the historian Dion Cassius* seems to have collected from the popular traditions, deeply tinged with the pagan superstition of the age. The narrative given by the Younger Pliny in two letters to his friend Tacitus, the great Roman annalist, is much more circumstantial and accurate, as might be expected from an eye-witness.

“Your request,” he says, “that I should send you an account of my uncle’s death, in order to transmit a more exact relation of it to posterity, deserves my acknowledgments, for if this accident shall be celebrated by your pen, the glory of it I am well assured will be rendered for ever illustrious. And notwithstanding he perished by a misfortune, which as it involved at the same time a most beautiful country in ruins, and destroyed so many populous cities, seems to promise him an everlasting remembrance; notwithstanding he has himself composed many and lasting works, will greatly contribute to eternize his name. Happy I esteem those to be, whom Providence has distinguished with the abilities either of doing such actions as are worthy of being related, or of relating them in a manner worthy of being read; but doubly happy are they who are blessed with both those uncommon talents: in the number of which my uncle, as his own writings and your history will evidently prove, may justly be ranked. It is with extreme willingness, therefore, I execute, and should indeed have claimed the task, if you had not enjoined it.

“He was at that time with the fleet under his command at Misenum. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud which appeared of a very unusual size and shape. He had just returned from taking the benefit of the sun, and after bathing himself in cold water, and taking a slight repast, was retired to his study. He

* L. lxvi.

immediately arose and went out upon an eminence, whence he might more distinctly view this very uncommon appearance. It was not at that distance discernible from what mountain this cloud issued, but it was found afterwards to ascend from Mount Vesuvius. I cannot give a more exact description of its figure, than by resembling it to that of a pine tree, for it shot up a great height in form of a trunk, which extended itself at the top into a sort of branches, occasioned, I imagine, either by a sudden gust of air that impelled it, the force of which decreased as it advanced upwards, or the cloud itself being pressed back again by its own weight, expanded in this manner ; it appeared sometimes bright and sometimes dark and spotted, as it was more or less impregnated with earth and cinders. This extraordinary phenomenon excited my uncle's philosophical curiosity to take a nearer view of it. He ordered a light vessel to be got ready, and gave me the liberty, if I thought proper, to attend him. I rather chose to continue my studies, for, as it happened, he had given me an employment of that kind. As he was coming out of the house, he received a note from Rectina, the wife of Bassus, who was in the utmost alarm at the imminent danger which threatened her ; for her villa being situated at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, there was no way to escape but by sea ; she earnestly entreated him, therefore, to come to her assistance. He accordingly changed his first design, and what he began with a philosophical, he pursued with an heroical turn of mind. He ordered the galleys to put to sea, and went on board himself, with an intention of assisting not only Rectina, but several others, *for the villas stand extremely thick upon that beautiful coast.* When hastening to the place whence others fled with the utmost terror, he steered his direct course to the point of danger, and with so much calmness and presence of mind, as to be able to make and dictate his observations upon the motion and figure of the dreadful scene. He was now so nigh the mountain, that the cinders which grew thicker and

hotter the nearer he approached, fell into the ships, together with pumice stones and black pieces of burning rock ; they were likewise in danger of being aground by the sudden retreat of the sea, but also from the vast fragments which rolled down from the mountain and obstructed all the shore. Here he stopped to consider whether he should return back again ; to which the pilot advising him,—‘Fortune,’ said he, ‘befriends the brave, carry me to Pomponianus.’ Pomponianus was then at *Stabiæ*, separated by a gulf which the sea, after several insensible windings, forms upon the shore. He had already sent his baggage on board, for though he was not at that time in actual danger, yet being in the view of it, indeed extremely near, if it should in the least increase he was determined to put to sea as soon as the wind should change. It was favourable, however, to carry my uncle to Pomponianus, whom he found in the greatest consternation ; he embraced him with tenderness, encouraging and exhorting him to keep up his spirits, and the more to dissipate his fears he ordered with an air of unconcern the baths to be got ready ; when, after having bathed, he sat down to supper with great cheerfulness, or at least (what is equally heroic) with all the appearance of it.

“ In the meanwhile, the eruption from Mount Vesuvius flamed out in several places with much violence, which the darkness of the night contributed to render still more visible and dreadful. But my uncle in order to soothe the apprehensions of his friend assured him it was only the burning of the villages, which the country people had abandoned to the flames ; after this he retired to rest, and it is most certain he was so little discomposed as to fall into a deep sleep, for being pretty fat and breathing hard, those who attended without actually heard him snore. The court which led to his apartment being now almost filled with stones and ashes, if he had continued there any time longer it would have been impossible for him to have made his way out, it was thought proper

therefore to awaken him. He got up and went to Pomponianus, and the rest of his company who were not unconcerned enough to think of going to bed. They consulted together whether it would be most prudent to trust to the houses, or fly to the open fields, where the calcined stones and cinders, though light indeed, yet fell in large showers, and threatened destruction. In this distress they resolved for the fields, as the less dangerous situation of the two ; a resolution which, while the rest of the company were hurried into by their fears, my uncle embraced upon cool and deliberate consideration. They went out, then, having pillows tied upon their heads with napkins, and this was their whole defence against the storm of stones that fell around them. It was now day every where else, but there a deeper darkness prevailed than in the most obscure night, which however was in some degree dissipated by torches and other lights of various kinds. They thought proper to go down further upon the shore, to observe if they might safely put out to sea ; but they found the waves still ran extremely high and boisterous. There my uncle having drunk a draught or two of cold water, threw himself down upon a cloth which was spread for him, when immediately the flames and a strong smell of sulphur which was the forerunner of them, dispersed the rest of the company, and obliged him to rise. He raised himself up with the assistance of two of his servants, and instantly fell down dead, as I conjecture, by some gross and noxious vapour.

“ During all this time, my mother and I were at Misenum. My uncle having left us, I pursued the studies which prevented my going with him, till it was time to bathe. After which I went to supper, and thence to bed, where my sleep was greatly broken and disturbed. There had been for many days before some shocks of an earthquake, which the less surprised us as they are extremely frequent in Campania ; but they were so particularly violent that night, that they not only shook every thing about us, but seemed indeed to threaten

total destruction. My mother flew to my chamber, where she found me rising to awaken her. We went out into a small court belonging to the house which separated the sea from the buildings. As I was at that time but eighteen years of age, I know not whether I should call my behaviour in this dangerous juncture courage or rashness ; but I took up Livy, and amused myself with turning over that author, and even making extracts from him, as if all about me had been in full security. While we were in this posture, a friend of my uncle's, who was just come from Spain to pay him a visit, joined us ; and observing me sitting by my mother with a book in my hand, greatly condemned her calmness, at the same time that he reproved me for my careless security ; nevertheless, I still went on with my author. Though it was now morning, the light was exceedingly faint and languid, the buildings all around us tottered, and though we stood upon open ground, yet as the place was narrow and confined, there was no remaining there without certain and great danger ; we therefore resolved to quit the town. The people followed us in the utmost consternation, and, as to a mind distracted with terror every suggestion seems more prudent than its own, pressed in great crowds about us in our way out. Being got at a convenient distance from the houses, we stood still in the midst of a most dangerous and dreadful scene. The chariots which we had ordered to be drawn out were so agitated backwards and forwards, though upon the most level ground, that we could not keep them steady, even by supporting them with large stones.

“ The sea seemed to roll back upon itself, and to be driven from its banks by the convulsive motion of the earth ; it is certain, at least, the shore was considerably enlarged, and several sea animals were left upon it. On the other side (of the Bay towards Herculaneum and Vesuvius) a black and dreadful cloud, bursting with an igneous serpentine vapour, darted out a long train of fire, resembling flashes of lightning, but

much larger. Upon this our Spanish friend, whom I mentioned above, addressed himself to my mother, and with great warmth and earnestness : 'If your brother and uncle,' said he, 'is safe, he certainly wishes you may be so too ; but if he perished, it was his desire, do doubt, that you might both survive him ; why, therefore, do you delay your escape a moment ?' We could never think of our own safety, we said, while we were uncertain of his. Hereupon our friend left us, and withdrew from the danger with the utmost precipitation. Soon afterwards the cloud seemed to descend and cover the whole ocean, as indeed it entirely hid the island of Caprea and the promontory of Misenum.

" My mother strongly conjured me to make my escape, at any rate, which, as I was young, I might easily do ; as for herself, she said, her age and corpulency rendered all attempts of that sort impossible. However, she would willingly meet death if she could have the satisfaction of seeing that she was not the occasion of mine. But I absolutely refused to leave her, and taking her by the hand, I led her on. She complied with great reluctance, and not without many reproaches to herself for retarding my flight. The ashes now began to fall upon us, though in no great quantity. I turned my head, and observed behind us a thick smoke, which came rolling after us like a torrent. I proposed while we had yet any light to turn out of the high road, lest she should be pressed to death in the dark by the crowd that followed us. We had scarce stepped out of the path, when darkness overspread us, not like that of a cloudy night or when there is no moon, but of a room where it is shut up and the lights extinct. Nothing was then to be heard but the shrieks of women, the screams of children, and the cries of men ; some calling for their children, others for their parents, others for their husbands, and only distinguishing each other by their voices ; one lamenting his own fate, another that of his family ; some wishing to die from the very fear of

dying, some lifting their hands to the gods ; but the greater part imagining that the last and eternal night was come which was to destroy the gods and the world together.* Among these were some who augmented the real terrors by imaginary ones, and made the affrighted multitudes falsely believe that Misenum was actually in flames.

“ At length a glimmering light appeared, which we imagined rather the forerunner of an approaching burst of flames, as in truth it was, than the return of day. However, the fire fell at a distance from us ; then again we were immersed in thick darkness, and a thick shower of ashes rained upon us, which we were obliged every now and then to shake off, otherwise we should have been crushed and buried in the heap. I might boast that during all this scene not a sigh or expression of fear escaped from me, had not my support been founded in that miserable though strong consolation—that all mankind were involved in the same calamity, and that I imagined I was perishing with the world itself !

“ At last this dreadful darkness was dissipated by degrees, like a cloud of smoke ; and the real day returned, and even the sun appeared, though very faintly, and as when an eclipse is coming on. Every object that presented itself to our eyes (which were extremely weakened) seemed changed, being covered over with white ashes as with a deep snow.”†

* The Stoic and Epicurean philosophers held that the world was to be destroyed by fire, and all things fall again into original chaos ; not excepting even the national gods themselves from the destruction of the general conflagration.—*Melmoth.*

† Dion Cassius, in the place above quoted, says the ashes reached Africa, Syria, and Egypt, filling the air above Rome, and overclouding the sun and causing much fear for many days, men not knowing what had happened, and imagining that the world was about to lapse in chaos. Subsequently the ashes produced a pestilential disease. The foregoing letters are from Melmoth’s Transl. Pliny’s Letters, let. 16 and 20. The reader will at once perceive their dramatic connexion with the scenes in the Centurion’s narrative, which are supposed to have taken place when the cities around the bay of Naples were visited by the apostle, whom he was conducting to Rome.

CHAPTER V.

“Certè ipse orbis in promptu est cultior de die, et instructior pristino ; omnia jam pervia, omnia nota, omnia negotiosa ; solitudines famosas retro fundi amænissimi oblitteraverunt, sylvas arva domuerunt ; feras pecora fugaverunt ; arenæ seruntur, saxa punguntur, paludes eliquantur. Tantæ urbes quantæ non case quondam. Jam nec insulæ horrent, nec scopulæ terrent ; ubique domus, ubique populus, ubique respublica, ubique vita ; summum testimonium fræquentia hujusmodi, onorosi sumus mundo ; vix nobis elementa sufficient ; et necessitas arctiores, et quærelæ apud omnes, dum jam nos natura non sustinet.”—*Tertullian, de Anima*, xxx.

DOMITIAN, who succeeded Titus, and was not free from suspicion of having had a hand in his brother's death, was himself, after a despotic reign of about fifteen years, got rid of by the poniard ! The period between his death and the accession of Commodus, is that in which the Roman world is said to have enjoyed the greatest happiness and prosperity.*

“The vast extent of the empire,” says Gibbon, “was governed by absolute power under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws.”

“This was the period,” says Sismondi, “at which more especially the provincial cities attained the highest pitch of opulence, and were adorned with the most remarkable edifices. Adrian had a strong taste for the arts, and for all the enjoyments of life.

* From A.D. 96 to A.D. 180.

(The *deification* of Antinœus, by his order, his medals, statues, *temples*, city, *oracles*, and constellations, are but too well known for the honour of humanity.*.) Adrian was continually travelling through the provinces of his vast empire; he excited emulation among the several large cities and the wealthier citizens; and he carried to the furthest extremities of the Roman dominions that luxury and taste for decoration which, before his time, was the exclusive distinction of those magnificent cities which were deemed the depositaries of the civilization of the world. This example of the emperors was universally imitated by their subjects. Scarcely had the proud structure of the Coliseum been dedicated at Rome" (it was there St. Ignatius, disciple of St. John the Evangelist, was devoured by wild beasts,) "before the edifices of a smaller scale indeed, but of the same design and materials, were erected for the use, and at the expense of the cities of Capua and Verona. The inscription of the stupendous bridge of Alcantara attests that it was thrown over the Tagus by the contribution of a few Lusitanian (Portuguese) communities. When Pliny the younger was intrusted by Trajan with the government of Bithynia and Pontus, provinces by no means the richest or most considerable of the empire, he found the cities within his jurisdiction striving with each other in every useful and ornamental work that deserves the curiosity of strangers, or the gratitude of their citizens. The opulent senators of Rome and the provinces esteemed it an honour, and almost an obligation, to adorn the splendour of their age and country; and the influence of fashion very frequently supplied the want of taste or generosity. Among a crowd of these private benefactors, it is usual with historians to select as a sample, Herodes Atticus, an Athenian citizen, who lived in the age of the Antonines.

* See Spanheim, *Comment sur les Cœsars et Julien*, note 80; also Gibbon, ch. iii. p. 91.

The ablest preceptors of Greece and Asia had been invited by liberal rewards to direct the education of young Herod. Their pupil soon became a celebrated orator, according to the useless rhetoric of that age, which, confining itself to the schools, disdained to visit either the forum or the senate. He was honoured with the consulship of Rome; but the greatest part of his life was spent in philosophic retirement at Athens and his adjacent villas, perpetually surrounded by sophists, who acknowledged without reluctance the superiority of a rich and generous rival. The monuments of his genius have perished. Some considerable ruins still preserve the fame of his taste and munificence. He had received a grant of 3,000,000 drachmæ (£100,000) for the construction of an aqueduct at Troy; but to render it more magnificent, he doubled the sum from his own private fortune. At Athens, where he presided over the public games, he built a stadium of white marble 600 feet in length, and of sufficient size to contain the whole body of the people. Shortly afterwards, having lost his wife Regilla, he consecrated to her memory a theatre which was unmatched through the whole extent of the empire. The only timber used was cedar, which was exquisitely carved. The Odeon, built in the time of Pericles, had fallen into ruin. Herodes Atticus rebuilt it, at his own cost, in all its ancient splendour. Greece was likewise indebted to him for the restoration of the temple of Neptune, in the isthmus of Corinth, for the construction of a theatre at Corinth, for a stadium at Delphi, a bath at Thermopylæ; and Italy for an aqueduct at Canusium. Many other cities of Epirus, Thessalia, Eubœa, Boeotia, and Peloponnesus, were likewise adorned through his liberality. Every province contained some citizen who resembled Herod in magnificence. “We cannot refuse the tribute of praise to Atticus,” concludes Sismondi, “but we must pity the country where such fortunes can be accumulated; where one man of enormous wealth and thousands of dependent slaves, must have taken the

place of millions of men, free, happy, and virtuous."

"The vast extent of ground which had been usurped by the selfish luxury of Nero for his golden palace and its adjacent parks, gardens, hippodromes, and artificial lakes, was more nobly filled," says Mr. Gibbon, "by the Coliseum, (dedicated to murder,) the baths of Titus, the Claudian porticos, the temple dedicated to the goddess of peace, and the temple of the Roman Venus. (This last mentioned *temple* was a public brothel.) These monuments of architecture, the property of the Roman people, were adorned with the most beautiful productions of Grecian painting and sculpture; and in the temple of Peace a very curious library was opened to the curiosity of the learned. At a small distance from thence was situated the forum of Trajan. It was surrounded with a lofty portico in the form of a quadrangle, into which four triumphal arches opened a noble and spacious entrance; in the centre, (rather at the west end,) arose a column of marble, whose height, of one hundred and ten feet, denoted the elevation of the hill that had been cut away (by slaves, multitudes of whom were Christians). This column, which still subsists in its ancient beauty, (surmounted by the statue of St. Peter,) exhibited an exact representation of the Dacian victories of the founder, (the Ghengis Khan of his age). The veteran soldier contemplated the story of his own campaigns, and by an easy illusion of national vanity, the peaceful citizen associated himself to the honours of the triumph, (and to the merit of the havoc and devastation.) All the other quarters of the capital and all the provinces of the empire were embellished by the same liberal spirit of public magnificence, and were filled with amphitheatres, theatres, temples, porticos, triumphal arches, baths, and aqueducts, all variously conducive to the health, the devotion, and the pleasures of the meanest citizen. The aqueducts of the capital claim a just pre-eminence; but the curious traveller, who, without the

light of history, should examine those of Spoleto, of Metz, or of Segovia, would very naturally conclude, that those provincial towns had formerly been the residence of some potent monarch. The solitudes of Asia and Africa were covered, in the age of the Antonines, with flourishing cities, whose populousness, and even whose existence was derived from such artificial supplies of a perennial stream of fresh water.

“ Italy alone contained eleven hundred and ninety-seven cities. Many were the cities of Gaul: Marseilles, Arles, Nismes, Narbonne, Thoulouse, Bourdeaux, Autun, Vienne, Lyons, Langres, and Trèves, whose ancient condition might sustain an equal, and perhaps advantageous comparison with their present state. Spain numbered three hundred and sixty cities. In Africa there were three hundred cities, within the limits of the ancient domain of Carthage, which, like Corinth, had risen with new splendour from the heap of ruins to which Scipio had reduced it, and where Marius had ruminated upon his own reverse of fortune. Proper Asia alone contained five hundred populous cities, enriched with all the gifts of nature and adorned with all the refinements of art. Eleven cities of Asia had once disputed the honour of dedicating a temple to Tiberius, and their respective claims were examined by the senate. Four of them were immediately rejected, as unequal to the burden; and among these was Laodicea, a place deriving great wealth from its trade in the fine wool of its flocks; and which had just before the contest received a legacy of £400,000 by the testament of one of its citizens. If such was the poverty of Laodicea, what must have been the wealth of those cities, whose claim appeared preferable, and particularly of Pergamus, of Smyrna, and of Ephesus, which so long disputed with each other the primacy of Asia? The capitals of Syria and Egypt held a superior rank in the empire; Antioch and Alexandria looked down with disdain on a crowd of dependent cities, and yielded, with

reluctance, to the majesty of Rome itself. The spirit of improvement had passed the Alps, and had been felt even in the woods of Britain, which were gradually cleared away, to open a free space for convenient and elegant habitations. York was the seat of government, London was already enriched by commerce, and Bath was celebrated for the salutary effects of its medicinal waters.”*

* *Decline and Fall, vol. i. passim.*

CHAPTER VI.

“The corruption of Rome had begun from the time of the republic, from the time the middle class ceased to impress its own peculiar character on the whole nation ; this corruption increased in proportion as the intermediate ranks disappeared ; it was carried to the highest pitch when the whole empire consisted of men of enormous wealth, and populace.”—*Sismondi, Fall of Rome, chap. vi.*

It is scarcely surprising that the Romans, dazzled as they were by the extensive sway and irresistible strength of the emperors, should have suffered themselves to despise and sometimes to forget the outlying countries possessed by savage nations without arts or discipline or any written laws, and that looking back to their disgrace and sufferings under the first Cæsars, they should have extolled the period of Trajan and the Antonines as a golden age.

Yet it was during this same period that peace and prosperity fostered the colossal growth of a few fortunes, of those *latifundia*, or vast domains, which, according to Pliny the elder, were the destruction of Italy and the empire. A single proprietor gradually became possessed of provinces which had furnished the republic with the occasion of decreeing more than one triumph to its generals. While he amassed wealth so disproportionate to the wants of a single man, he cleared all the country he got within his grasp of that numerous and respectable class of independent cultivators, hitherto so happy in their mediocrity. Where thousands of free citizens had formerly been found ready to defend the soil they tilled with their own hands, nothing was to be seen but

slaves.* Even this miserable population rapidly diminished, because its labour was too expensive ; and the proprietor found it answer better to turn his land into pasture. The fertile fields of Italy ceased to supply food for their inhabitants ; the provisioning of Rome depended on fleets which brought corn from Sicily, from Egypt, and from Africa ; from the capital to the uttermost provinces, depopulation followed in the train of overgrown wealth ; and it was in the midst of this universal prosperity, before a single barbarian had crossed the frontiers of the empire, that the difficulty of recruiting the legions began to be felt. In the war against the Quadi and Marcomanni, which was preceded by so long a peace, Marcus Aurelius was reduced to the necessity of enrolling the slaves and robbers of Rome.

The frontier provinces, those most exposed to the attacks of the barbarians, those which suffered the most from the presence and the military vexations of the legions, did not suffer so much from the rapid decline of population, and of the warlike virtues, as the more wealthy provinces of the interior. The levies of troops were no longer made in Rome ; they were raised almost exclusively in northern Gaul, and along the right bank of the Danube. This long Illyrian frontier in particular, for more than two centuries, preserved the reputation of furnishing more soldiers to the empire than all the rest of the provinces combined. This border country had offered little temptation to the cupidity of the Roman senators ; they cared not to have their property in a province constantly harassed by the enemy. The land which the senators would not buy remained in the possession of the old proprietors : there consequently a population, numerous, free, robust, and hardy, still maintained itself. It long

* A freedman, under the reign of Augustus, though his fortune had suffered great losses in the civil wars, left behind him 3,600 yoke of oxen, 250,000 head of smaller cattle, and, what was almost included in the description of cattle, 4,116 slaves.—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* l. xxxiii. 47 ; *Gib.* ch. ii. p. 50.

furnished the army with soldiers ; it soon supplied it with chiefs.*

It was scarcely possible that the eyes of contemporaries should discover in the public felicity the causes of decay and corruption. This long peace, and the uniform government of the Romans, introduced a slow and secret poison into the vitals of the empire. The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level, the fire of genius was extinguished, and even the military spirit evaporated ; Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Illyricum, supplied the legions with excellent soldiers, and constituted the real strength of the monarchy. Their personal valour remained, but they no longer possessed that public courage which is nourished by the love of independence, the sense of national honour, the presence of danger, and the habit of command. They received laws and governors from the will of despotic sovereigns, and trusted for their defence to a mercenary army.

That army soon ceased to be even officered by men who had received a liberal education, and were instructed in the advantages of laws and letters. Effeminacy, and the extinction of every spark of patriotism and independence among the nobles, had made them averse to the military service ; so that their total exclusion from it, by Gallienus, would seem to have been acquiesced in by them, with secret satisfaction. The more polished citizens of the internal provinces were alone qualified to act as lawyers and magistrates. The rougher trade of arms was abandoned to the peasants and barbarians of the frontiers, who knew no country but the camp, no science but that of war, no civil laws, and scarcely those of military discipline ; with bloody hands, savage manners, and desperate resolutions, they sometimes guarded, but much oftener subverted the throne of the emperors.†

Commodus, son and successor of Marcus Aurelius,

* See Sismondi, *Fall of Rome*, vol. i. p. 34.

† Gibbon, ch. vi. p. 201.

having been murdered in the year 193,* was succeeded by Helvius Pertinax, soon after murdered by the Praetorian guards, who then set the empire to auction. Didius Julius, a wealthy senator, was the highest bidder, but expiated his presumption with his life, after a reign, such as it was, of only sixty days. It is not improbable, that Septimius Severus, who succeeded, was murdered by his own son Caracalla, who, in order to rid himself of a partner in the throne, assassinated his brother Geta in the arms of their common mother, where the unfortunate young prince had taken refuge. Caracalla fell, in his turn, by the hand of a private soldier, and was succeeded by Opilius Macrinus, soon after slain, to be succeeded by Heliogabalus, who was soon murdered, and flung into the Tiber, with a stone tied about his neck. His successor, Alexander Severus, was murdered in his tent, and succeeded by Maximin, a Goth, who, with his son, was soon after murdered. Pupienus and Cælius Albinus, who succeeded, were slain by the soldiery, who elect the youthful Gordian emperor. He, when hardly eighteen, is also murdered. Philip, an Arab by birth, succeeds with his brother, and both are slain by Decius, who, succeeding, is himself slain, by the Goths, with his only son. The vacant purple is given to Gallus by the army, but, on seeing a rival advancing at the head of a superior force, they murder himself and his son, and pass over to Julius Emilianus, whom they murder on the approach of Valerian. This emperor, having been taken prisoner by Sapor, king of Persia, was flayed alive, after having been used as a footstool by his conqueror, and treated with various other indignities. The reign of his son and colleague Gallienus, is the time of the "Thirty Tyrants."

The election of these precarious emperors, their power, and their death, were equally destructive to their subjects and adherents.† The price of their

* See Denina, *Delle Rivoluzione d'Italia*, l. iii. 3, ver. med. Gibbon, ch. iv. to x.

† Gibbon, vol. i. p. 333.

fatal elevation was instantly discharged to the troops by an immense donative drawn from the bowels of the exhausted people; whatever their character, or intentions, they found themselves reduced to the hard necessity of supporting their usurpation by frequent acts of rapine and cruelty. When they fell, they involved armies and provinces in their fall. There is still extant a mandate from Gallienus to one of his ministers, after the suppression of Ingenuus, who had assumed the purple in Illyricum.

“It is not enough,” says that soft and inhuman prince, “that you exterminate such as have appeared in arms; the chance of battle might have served me as effectually. The male sex of every age must be extirpated; provided that in the execution of the children and old men, you can contrive means to save our reputation. Let every one die who has dropped an expression, who has entertained a thought against me—against me, the son of Valerian, the father and brother of so many princes. Remember that Ingenuus was made emperor; tear, kill, hew him to pieces. I write to you with my own hand, and would inspire you with my own feelings.”

“Thus,” says Sismondi, “was the world taught, by ninety-two years of nearly incessant civil war, on what a frail and instable foundation the virtue of the Antonines had reared the felicity of the empire. During that time, thirty-two emperors and twenty-seven pretenders to the empire alternately hurled each other from the throne, either by open violence or assassination; the sovereignty of the world was put up to auction; the legions of the east and west disputed the fatal honour of decorating with the purple men taken from the lowest ranks of society, without genius, without education, raised by the brutal caprice of their comrades, above all that the world had been accustomed to hold in reverence.” When the military order had thus levelled in wild anarchy the laws of the senate and even the discipline of the camp, the barbarians of the north and of the east, who had hovered on the

frontiers, boldly attacked the provinces of the declining monarchy. The legions, enfeebled and reduced to less than 6,000 men each, had been withdrawn from guarding against their invasions, to massacre each other in almost continual conflicts. Their discipline was utterly destroyed; their leaders neither merited nor obtained their confidence. After a defeat, it was impossible to recruit the army, on account of causes before alluded to, and of the clearance system in particular. At the moment of an attack, it was with the greatest difficulty they could be induced to march. The barbarians, witnesses of this anarchy, and of these conflicts, no longer beholding on their frontiers those formidable camps of the legions which had so long held them in awe, as if by common consent made incursions at all points at once, from the extremities of Caledonia to those of Persia.

Issuing from the frozen regions beyond the Baltic, the Goths, in the reign of Alexander Severus, broke in upon the provinces of Dacia, ravaged Masia in the reign of Philip, and, although frequently encountered and driven back with slaughter upon the German borders, new swarms succeeded, and, advancing further south in each new invasion, at length, near an obscure town of Masia, called Forum Terebonii, joined battle with the imperial legions, commanded by Decius in person, routed them with tremendous havoc, slaying the emperor and his son upon the field. Following up this victory, we find them successively plundering, and leaving desolate, the rich cities of Trapezus (Trebizond,) Chalcedon, Nicæa, Nicomedia, Apamæa, Prusa, Cyzicus, and, thence sweeping along the Bosphorus and Propontis, passing the Hellespont with a fleet of five hundred vessels, and so entering the Piræus. Athens could offer no resistance. A general conflagration blazed out at the same time in every district of Greece. Thebes and Argos, Corinth and Sparta, which had formerly waged war against each other, were now unable to defend their ruined walls. Both by land and by sea, the rage of war spread from

the eastern point of Sunium to the western coast of Epirus, nor were the invaders checked in the career of devastation until within sight of Italy.

In another direction, the empire was invaded by the Franks, the name of a confederacy of the Chaucans, Cherucans, Chattans, and other fierce tribes of warlike Germany, whose valour had for centuries proved formidable to the Romans. The Rhine, though dignified with the title of "safeguard of the provinces," was an imperfect barrier against their daring spirit. They burst upon Gaul. Their rapid devastations stretched from the river to the foot of the Pyrenees, nor were they stopped by the mountains. Spain, which had never dreaded, was unable to resist the inroads of the Germans, and during twelve years that opulent country was the theatre of unequal and destructive hostilities. Wretched cottages, scattered amidst the ruins of magnificent cities, for centuries afterwards recorded the rage of the barbarians.

When the exhausted country no longer supplied a variety of plunder, the Franks seized on some vessels in the sea ports, and transported themselves into Mauritania. The distant province was astonished with the fury of these invaders, who seemed to fall from a new world, as their name, manners, and complexion, were equally unknown on the coast of Africa.

Jealous as were the Germans of military renown, they all confessed the superior valour of the Suevi, whose wide extended name filled the immense countries between the Oder and the Danube. They were distinguished from the rest of their countrymen by their peculiar mode of dressing their long hair, which they gathered into a rude knot on the crown of the head; and they delighted in an ornament that showed their ranks more lofty and terrible in the eyes of the enemy. At stated periods, the tribes, who gloried in the Suevic blood, resorted, by their ambassadors, to a sacred wood, deemed to be the birth-place of the

* Gibbon, vol. i. p. 308.

nation, and there the memory of their common origin was perpetuated by human sacrifices. Such were the warlike people, who, under the title of Alemans, or "Allmen," first lifted the veil that covered the feeble majesty of Italy. Bursting across the Danube, and through the Rhætian Alps, they spread dismay over the plains of Lombardy, advanced as far as Ravenna, and displayed the victorious banner of barbarians almost in sight of Rome.*

In all their invasions, these barbarians preserved the recollection of the long terrors, and the long resentment with which the Romans had inspired them. Their hatred was still too fresh and fervent to allow them to show any pity to their vanquished foes. Till then they had seen nothing of the Romans but their soldiers, but when they suddenly penetrated into the midst of these magnificent and populous cities, at first they feared that they should be crushed by a multitude so superior to their own ; but when they saw and understood the cowardice of these enervated masses, their fear was changed into the deepest scorn. Their cruelty was in proportion to these two sentiments, and their object was rather destruction than conquest. The population, which had been thinned by the operation of wealth and luxury, was now further reduced by that of poverty. The human species seemed to vanish before the sword of the barbarians. Sometimes they massacred all the inhabitants of a town ; sometimes they sent them into slavery, far from the country of their birth. After such calamities, fresh fears, fresh oppression, fresh miseries effectually checked the growth of the population. Vast deserts formed themselves in the heart of the empire.†

* It was on this occasion that human beings were immolated on the altars of the Capitol, to secure the repulse of the barbarians. Aurelian paraded his liberality, by offering to supply victims from whatever nation the Etruscans might desire them, and rebuked the senate for acting, as he said, more like men in a church of the Christians, than in a pagan temple.—*Gibbon*, vol. i. p. 308.

† Sismondi, v. i. 39.

General famine was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, which extirpated the produce of the present, and the hope of future harvests. Famine is almost always followed by epidemical diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. Other causes must, however, have contributed to the furious plague, which, from the year 250 to the year 265, raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family of the Roman empire. During some time five thousand persons died daily in Rome ; and many towns that had escaped the hands of the barbarians were entirely depopulated. Applying this authentic fact to the most correct tables of mortality, it evidently proves that above half the people of Alexandria had perished ; and could we venture to extend the analogy to the other provinces, we might suspect that war, pestilence, and famine, had consumed in a few years the moiety of the human species.

It is scarcely surprising that the face of nature should have appeared sad and boding to a generation thus overwhelmed with calamities.

“ The showers of spring time fail us,” they said, “ for nourishing the seed : the sun’s heat in summer for ripening the corn. The fields have ceased to put forth their verdure in due season, and the trees of autumn are barren of their accustomed issue. Mountains, disemboweled, and ransacked, yield a shortened store of marble layers ; the exhausted mines send up but a scanty wealth of silver and of gold, their impoverished veins day by day are narrowed and diminished. While the husbandman languishes in the fields, the sailor at sea, the soldier in the camp, honesty sinks in the mart, justice from the tribunal, affection from friendship, skill from the arts, and discipline from society. Life has scarcely dawned in infancy, when it seems to hasten to decrepitude ; and every thing that comes into existence now, deteriorates rapidly, as if affected by this senility of the universe itself.”

In short, from the secular games celebrated by Philip, (u. c. 1000,) to the death (by assassination,) of the emperor Gallienus, there elapsed twenty years of shame and misfortune, during which period every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman world was afflicted by barbarous invaders, or military tyrants, and the ruined empire seemed to approach the last and fatal moment of its dissolution. Claudius, surnamed the Gothic, who succeeded him, writes thus to the senate on his accession. A. D. 269.

“Conscript fathers! know that three hundred and twenty thousand Goths have invaded the Roman territory. If I vanquish them, your gratitude will reward my services. Should I fall, remember that I am the successor of Gallienus. The whole republic is fatigued and exhausted; and even though successful against its foreign foes, we shall have still to subdue the thousand usurpers whom a just contempt for Gallienus provoked into rebellion. We are in want of darts, of spears, and of shields. The strength of the empire, Gaul and Spain, are usurped by Tetricus, and we blush to acknowledge that the archers of the east serve under the banners of Zenobia.”

In the midst of the Gothic war, which he had carried on for two years with great heroism and ferocity, Claudius died of pestilence at Sirmium, recommending, as the man best qualified to cope with the perils of the state, the son of a Dacian peasant, who by his matchless valour had raised himself from the ranks to the command of the Roman armies. This was Aurelian. It is true his victories, during a four years' reign, which formed but one continuous campaign, were numerous and brilliant: in his triumph, not only Goths, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alemanni, Franks, Gauls, Syrians, Egyptians, but queens and emperors were led in chains; but the new line of wall with which he fortified the eternal city, was a signal that the frontiers had given way, and that, in despite of all resistance, the surges of invasions would beat, ere long, over the Capitol itself.

"The wall of Aurelian," says Gibbon, "was a great but a melancholy labour," since the defence of the capital betrayed the decline of the monarchy. The Romans of a more prosperous age, who trusted to the arms of the legions the safety of the frontier camps, were very far from entertaining a suspicion that it would ever become necessary to fortify the seat of empire against the inroads of barbarians. In fact, from this reign, interrupted as usual by assassination, up to the triumph of Constantine the Great, the provinces of the Roman world were not only desolated by barbarians, but its government and destinies were in their hands.

Aurelian withdrew the Roman forces from Dacia, and tacitly relinquished that great province to the Goths and Vandals. Probus even invited the barbarians to settle within the vast solitudes, which incessant wars had left along the entire extent of Illyria. Into Britain, and most probably into Cambridgeshire, he transported a considerable body of Vandals. Great numbers of Gepidæ and Franks were settled on the banks of the Danube and the Rhine; a hundred thousand Bastarnæ, expelled from their own country, were established in Thrace. Besides all this, vast bodies of the invaders were taken into the Roman service to make head against their own countrymen, whom the effete and demoralized Romans were no longer able to resist.

"The feeble elegance of Italy," says Gibbon, "and of the internal provinces, could no longer support the weight of arms." The hardy frontier of the Rhine and Danube still produced minds and bodies equal to the labours of the camp; but a perpetual series of wars had gradually diminished their numbers, and the libertinism of manners with the ruin of agriculture resulting from this state of things, not only destroyed the strength of the provinces, but intercepted the hopes of future generations. Rome, no longer able even to defend herself with iron, had recourse to gold, and, thenceforward, it was only by contriving to martial the invaders

themselves in her defence, that she endeavoured to ward off impending ruin. Nay, from the accession of Diocletian,* a barbarian and a slave, up to the astonishing rise and triumph of Constantine the Great, the whole Roman world was not so much invaded, as ravaged and held in unresisting thraldom, during a period of upwards of thirty years, by emperors devoted to barbarian views and passions, and hostile to the interests and existence of Rome.

* 17th of September, A. D. 284.

CHAPTER VII.

“Di tutti questi imperadori, niuno ve n’ ebbe, da cui le lettere ricevessero protezione e favore. Uomini per la più parte o nati di bassa stirpe, o allevati fin da fanciulli frall’ armi, appena le conoscevan per nome.”—*Tiraboschi, Stor. della Letter. Ital.* tom. ii. l. ii. cap. i. xv.

THE parents of Diocletian had been slaves in the house of Annulinus, a Roman senator;* it is not improbable that his father, it is certain that his mother, was of barbarian descent.

When the son of these captives, of whose bitter wrongs and insults he no doubt had often heard, beheld the Roman world at his feet, it was not unnatural that resentments, which could not fail to be excited in a haughty and revengeful spirit by such family recollections, should have given a tinge even to his imperial policy. But no matter what might be their secret spring, his measures were obviously calculated to humble and degrade the Romans; and, but for the astonishing rise and triumph of Constantine, must have opened for the barbarians of the north an easy access to the capital, a full century at least before the Goths ascended it. One of his darling objects was to rival, if not eclipse, the architectural glories of Rome by those of Nicomedia, to which he had transferred the seat of empire.† Except in the twentieth year of his reign when he celebrated his triumph, it is extremely doubtful, according to Gibbon, whether he ever visited the ancient capital; and even then the aristocratic deportment of the patricians, and the familiarity of the plebeians, proved so insufferable to the quondam barbarian slave, that he left, after a stay of scarcely two months, and without even

* *Decline and Fall*, ch. xiii. vol. ii. p. 1. † *Ibid*, p. 35.

waiting to assume the consulship, as he had intended.

“This dislike,” says Gibbon, “was not the effect of momentary caprice, but the result of the most artful policy. That crafty prince had framed a new system of imperial government, and as the image of the old constitution was religiously preserved in the senate, he resolved to deprive that order of its small remains of power and consideration. As the sovereign of Italy, Maximian was intrusted with the execution of this design, and the task was perfectly suited to his cruel temper.

“The most illustrious members of the senate, whom Diocletian always affected to esteem, were involved by his colleague in the accusation of imaginary plots; and the possession of an elegant villa, or a well cultivated estate, was interpreted as a convincing evidence of guilt.* The camp of the Praetorians, which had so long oppressed, began to protect the majesty of Rome; by the prudent measures of Diocletian, their numbers were insensibly reduced, their privileges abolished, and their place supplied by two faithful legions of Illyricum. They were veteran corps, recruited from the barbarians and semi-barbarians of the frontier. Each of them was six thousand strong.

But the most fatal, though secret wound which the senate received from the hands of Diocletian and Maximian, was inflicted by the inevitable operation of their absence. As long as the emperors resided at Rome, that assembly might be oppressed, but it could scarcely be neglected. The successors of Augustus exercised the power of dictating whatever laws their wisdom or caprice might suggest; but those laws were ratified by the sanction of the senate. The model of ancient freedom was preserved in its deliberations and decrees, and wise princes, who respected the prejudices of the Roman people, were in some measure obliged to assume the language and behaviour suitable

* Lact. de Mort. Persecut. p. 17.

to the general and first magistrate of the republic. But Diocletian and his subalterns, fixing their residence in distant provinces, threw off the dissimulation that had been recommended by Augustus, disdaining even to go through the formality of submitting their measures to effeminate and polished nobles. With no advisers but military adventurers, barbarians like themselves, by origin and dispositions, they governed like ruthless despots. The senate of Rome, losing all connexion with the imperial court and the actual constitution, was left a venerable but useless monument of antiquity on the Capitoline hill.*

In the selection of colleagues, also, by Diocletian, in the first instance, and afterwards by Galerius, we trace the working of the same principle. Indeed the latter, less crafty, by reason of his savage violence, than Diocletian, did not conceal his determination to extirpate the senate, and to destroy the Roman people by the sword; then to transport from the seven hills for ever, the seat and regalia of the empire, which was thenceforth to be called the empire of Dacia, in honour of the country from which he and his colleagues derived their birth. It is expressly stated by the best history of this period, that a profession of hatred of the Roman name was required, by Diocletian, of those whom he invested with the purple.†

The first of these, Maximian Herculius, was a Dacian peasant from the neighbourhood of Sirmium; the same district which had produced Aurelian, and afterwards Galerius, and his kinsman and adoptive son Daza, or Maximin.

“Ignorant of letters,” says Gibbon, “careless of laws, the rusticity of Maximian’s appearance and man-

* Gibbon, ch. xiii. p. 38, et seq.

† “Olim quidem ille, *ut nomen imperatoris acciperet, hostem se Romani nominis erat professus; cuius titulum immutari volebat, ut non Romanum imperium sed Dacicum cognominaretur.*”—*Lact. de M. P.* xxvii. p. 54.

‡ April 1, A. D. 286.

ners still betrayed in the most elevated fortune the meanness of his extraction. War was the only art which he professed. Insensible to pity, and fearless of consequences, he was the ready instrument of every act of cruelty which the policy of his artful manager, Diocletian, found it expedient at once to suggest and disclaim.”*

“In describing the country, extraction, and manners of Herculius, the surname which Maximian assumed, we have already delineated those of Galerius,” says the same historian. “In him,” according to one of his contemporaries, “there was an inbred barbarism, and a savage ferocity altogether alien to the Roman blood. A thing not surprising, since his mother was from beyond the Danube, whence her clan, or tribe, had been driven across the river into the second Dacia, by an inroad of the Carpi.”† In his earlier days he herded cattle in the forests and the wilderness, and thence took pride in the title of Armentarius, or the herdsman; nor did his deportment and policy, when emperor, in any respect belie the epithet. He detested letters, of which he had not the slightest tincture; enormous bears were his favourite companions; and, whenever he feasted, it was his delight to contemplate the gore and the agonies of the human beings whom they devoured for his gratification, while he was indulging in pleasures of the table to the most glutinous excess.

Licinius and Daza, to whom he gave his own surname of Maximian, or Maximin, were selected by him for the imperial dignity, because of their congenial origin and dispositions.‡ Like himself, Daza had tended cattle in his youth; and when invested with the purple, he was sent as Cæsar, or subaltern-emperor, over the east; he governed its refined and effeminate population like a herdsman, treating his subjects not like Roman citizens, but like cattle. In short,

* Gibbon, ch. xiii. p. 11.

† Lact. de Mort. Persec. ix.

‡ Gibbon, ch. xiv. p. 70.

Constantius Clorus was the only Roman of the seven or eight emperors who ravaged the unfortunate empire in detail during this period, and *his* promotion to the rank of Caesar was like a mockery, or a plan to get rid of him ; since Britain, the province they assigned him, had been long possessed by a bold adventurer, who had not only defied the united forces of Diocletian and Maximian, but had compelled them to acknowledge his title of Augustus.*

One of the most ruinous consequences of Diocletian's system was the enormous increase of the military force, at the same time that the resources of the empire were, as we have already seen, almost totally exhausted. It was the ambition of each of the four, at another time of the six, at another of seven or eight emperors, to have armies more numerous than their colleagues, or even than any of the princes who had reigned over the empire when undivided and in its prime.

“ Thus it came to pass,” says a writer of that day, “ that those who were quartered on the taxes outnumbered those who were to pay them ; so that the husbandmen and farmers, overpowered and consumed by enormous exactions, forsook their homesteads ; and the fields, which their industry had tilled, reverted to the wilderness. And that no district might escape the general misery, each province was carved out into a vast number of small departments, and to each of these were appointed presidents, commissioners, inspectors of taxation, besides other officials without end ; whose functions consisted, exclusively, in exhausting and harassing the ill-fated population by every species of rapacity, and in embittering rapacity by insult. More like merciless invaders than officers of the commonwealth, they seized upon the standing crops, numbered the cattle, sheep, domestic animals, and even the vines and fruit trees, with the view to the levying a tax upon each of all these things. In town

* Gibbon, ch. xiii. p. 10 et seq.

and country the inhabitants were mustered ; each family, with all its members and dependents, being obliged to stand in separate droves, till they were counted like so many head of cattle. No infirmity of age, or sickness, could entitle to exemption. The languishing, the disabled, and the bed-ridden, were dragged out, and numbered in the poll-tax roll ; and the proctor, in order to swell the list, added to childhood, the years which he subtracted from decrepitude. Children were put to the torture before the eyes of their parents ; matrons, in the presence of their husbands, to force a confession of property to the full amount. Those who were not married, and had no children, were racked in their proper persons, till they confessed to an amount even beyond the truth, in order to escape from torment. Grief and lamentation filled every place. What the Romans had been accustomed of old to practise on their vanquished enemies, they were now doomed to suffer at the hands of barbarian emperors, who were determined to retaliate upon the Roman race, the self-same cruelties and exactions which their own Dacian sires had been made to endure again and again, particularly by Trajan.”*

Each division of tax-gatherers was followed by a train of supervisors, who never failed to increase the amount already rated, no matter how exorbitant that rate might be, lest they might seem wanting in zeal for the service, or to have been commissioned to no purpose. Meantime, the flocks and herds dwindled, and the human race disappeared. A tax was levied on the dead, so that even in the sepulchre there was no possibility of escape. Few but mendicants remained, and that the empire might not be disgraced by the pauperism created by misrule, crowds of miserable wretches were carried out to sea in ships and drowned

* Quæ veteres adversus victas, jure belli, fecerant, et ille (Galienus) adversus Romanos, Romanisque subjectos, facere ausus est ; quia parentes ejus censui subjecti fuerant quem Trajanus Dacis, assidue rebellantibus, poenæ gratia, victor imposuit.”—*Lact. de M. P. xxiii.*

under the pretence of punishing them for feigning poverty, in order to escape the tax.*

The indignities and insults with which females of the Roman race, especially those of the highest ranks, were treated by these barbarian despots, were such as not to admit of description, further than to state, that they were deficient in nothing that could be imagined by hacknied panders, and perpetrated by brutality; and, that the same licence which was practised by the emperors, they permitted, indiscriminately, to their followers and soldiery. They even cheered on their barbarians, whom they were ever loading with riches and titles, to every species of rapacity and outrage;† and if the vilest of these military ruffians demanded the proudest heiress, the consequence of a refusal was sure to be an imperial mandate to her parents, to choose between instant execution and a Dacian son-in-law: for these courtiers and body guards were for the most part composed of vagabond Goths, who, having been expelled, or escaping from among their own countrymen, had been received into the pay of the empire: "That after having disqualified themselves," concludes Lactantius, "to be even slaves to barbarians, they might become masters and tyrants of Romans."‡

But the darkest of all the horrors that brooded over the Roman world, and that one which gave the air of so many just judgments to all the rest, were the persecutions—barbarous and unrelenting—with which the emperors, the magistrates, and every order of the population, had continued to pursue for so many centuries, and to torment with tenfold fury, at this juncture, the beneficent and unoffending disciples of Jesus Christ.

Impossible that an empire could long exist in which one moiety of the people, demented by fanaticism, was

* Lact. *de Mort. Persec.* xxiii.

† "Barbaros omni generi largitionis honoret."—*Ibid.* xxxviii.
p. 71.

‡ *Id.* xxxviii. p. 72, 73; see also cap. viii.

let loose against the other half, and hallooed on to every species of outrage against property and life, by those who, as guardians of the commonwealth, were bound, not only by justice, but by policy, to repress instead of fomenting anarchy. Hence we learn from Eusebius, that during the whole ten years' persecution, the empire was torn asunder, and subjected to all the worst grievances of civil war.

“The sea,” he says, “was impassible to those who made voyages over it; neither could any persons arrive at any port, whatsoever, but they must endure all sorts of scourges, be tormented, have their sides torn with nails, and be interrogated by their undergoing all sorts of tortures, whether they came from the enemy’s country, and at last they underwent the punishment of crucifixion, or were burnt to death.”*

Famine, pestilence, and the incessant fear of invasion were superadded to these miseries. While all the social bonds and the very instincts of humanity were thus destroyed, the public resources wasted, the most virtuous and benevolent members of the community, with its bravest defenders even in the legions, cut down and massacred in thousands, not by a foreign enemy, but by the sword of antichristian ferocity, it was but too manifest that the organization of the mighty Colossus was dissolved already, and that it was about to become an easy prey to the barbarians hovering round it on all sides.†

* Euseb. *Eccl. Hist.* b. viii. ch. 15.

† “Neither could the dissensions and tumults of the Romans among themselves be made up and appeased before the Christians throughout the whole Roman empire had a peace ratified and confirmed to them. But as soon as that peace (like morning after a cloudy and most darksome night) darted forth its rays on all, public affairs were again restored to quietude, stability, harmony, and tranquillity: all persons recovering that mutual friendliness which had been derived down to them from their ancestors.”—*Eusebius, Book concerning the Martyrs of Palestine*, ch. iii.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

Portrait of St. Peter; his journey to Rome; how he employed himself on the banishment of the Jews from thence in the ninth year of Claudius; partition of the nations amongst the Apostles.

“ERAT Petrus corpore haud indecoro, nec tamen exiguo, erecta cervice, ore subpallido et albicanti, atris ac vivacibus oculis, sanguineam tamen redolentibus aciem, evulsiis superciliis, praelongo naso et simo pressæque ad extrema, denso crispoque capillo, animo haud versuto, et ante datam terrarum orbi legem, nondum immensâ illâ Dei magnitudine virgineo restrictâ utero, Mosaicæ legis non contemptor. Discendi avidus, et ingenio pugnaci, ex Galilæorum naturâ ac moribus, semper arma poscentium; et justi tenax.”—*Ex. Act. SS. tom. vi. Junii die 29^o, p. 2.*

On his way to Rome, he is said to have evangelized through Greece, converting St. Clement, son of Faustius, at Athens; landed at Naples, of which he appointed Asprenas bishop; thence to Rome, in the second year of Claudius, &c. He appointed Linus and Cletus bishops,—“ut unus in urbe, alter extra urbem, in administranda repub. chr. ipsum adjuvavent.” He himself is said to have preached all through Italy, and to have even penetrated as far as Britain after the expulsion of Jews from Rome in the ninth year of Claudius.

“Jamque apostoli sortiti inter se provincias erant; Petro Gallo-Græcia, Pontusque, Bithyniâ, Cappadociâ, cum Catanoûm gentibus; Andreæ, Scythia Europea; Asiatica Philippo; Palestina Jacobo; Asia Joanni; Hispania alteri Jacobo; Thomæ Parthia, Arriana, Persis, Margiana, Susiana quoque introrsus ad Bactra ortumque Gangis; Matheo regia solis et ultima Æthiopûm; Bartholomæo, India ad Sapolum usque urbem radicesque Imari; Simoni Chananaeo Ægyptus, Thebes, et quæ illi proxima; Thadæo, Mesopotamia, Pontusque; Mathiæ gentes Macedonum, Dardanorum, Triballorum, Bastarnarum,” &c.—*Ibid.*

Caractacus betrayed; his renown even in Italy and Rome; exhibited on the Campus Martius before the Praetorian guards, the senate, and the Roman people; his noble address to Claudio, &c.

“Ipse (ut ferme intuta sunt adversa) cum fidem Cartismanduæ, reginæ Brigantum, petivisset, vinctus ad victoribus traditus est, nono post anno, quam bellum in Britanniâ cœptum. Unde fama ejus evecta insulas et proximas provincias pervagata, per Italiam quoque celebrabatur; avebantque visere, quis ille tot per annos opes nostras sprevisset. Ne Romæ quidem ignobile Caractaci nomen erat; et Cæsar, dum suum decus extollit, addidit gloriam victo. Vocatus quippe, ut ad insigne spectaculum, populus. Stetâre in armis prætoriæ cohortes, campo, qui castra præjacet. Tum, incedentibus regiis clientelis, phaleræ torquesque; quæque externis bellis quæsierat, transducta; mox fratres, et conjux, et felia; postremo ipse ostentatus. Cæterorum preces degeneres fuere, ex metu; at non Caractacus, aut vultu demisso, aut verbis, misericordiam requires. Ubi tribunali adstitit, in hunc modum locutus est.”—*Tacit. ann. l. xii. cap. xxxvi.*

“Si, quanta nobilitas et fortuna mihi fuit, tanta rerum prosperarum moderatio fuisse, amicus potius in hanc urbem, quam captus, venissem: neque deditus essem claris majoribus ortum, pluribus gentibus imperitatem, fædere pacis accipere. Præsens sors mea, ut mihi informis, sic tibi magnifica est. Habui equos, viros, arma, opes: quid mirum, si hæc invitus amisi? Non, si vos omnibus imperitare vultis, sequitur, ut omnes servitutem accipiant. Si statim deditus traderer; neque mea fortuna, neque tua gloria inclinuisse; et supplicium mei oblivio sequeretur; at, si incolumem servaveris, æternum exemplar elementiæ ero.” Ad ea Cæsar veniam ipsique et conjugi et fratribus tribuit. Atque illi, vinclis exsoluti, Agrippinam quoque, haud procul alio suggestu conspicuam, iisdem, quibus principem laudibus gratibusque venerati sunt. Novum sane et moribus veterum insolitum, feminam signis Romanis præsidiere: ipsa semet parti a majoribus suis imperii sociam ferebat.”—*Cap. xxxvii.* The patriotism of Caractacus seems to have withered speedily in the atmosphere of the capital. When we next meet him he is in the livery of a king, engaged, under the inspection of his Roman employers, in riveting the fetters of his country:—“Quedam civitates *Cogiduno* regi donatae (is ad nostram usque memoriam fidissimus mansit) vetere ac jampridem receptâ populi Romani consuetudine, ut haberet instrumenta servitutis et reges.”—*Tacit. in Vit. Agric. xiv.* Britain became a civilized province, and fell an easy prey to the first invader.

APPENDIX B.

To show how wonderfully the great drama of human history has been shadowed out and sketched with graphic precision, in a series of prophecies.

I. In the year of the world 3141, the empire of the Assyrians was founded by Ninus. It embraced all Asia to the borders of India, besides Egypt and Africa as far as the Lybian desert. Its emperors reigned in Babylon the Great for one thousand two hundred and sixty years.

II. Cyrus, whose father was a Persian, whose mother was only daughter of Astyages, king of the Medes, was, in his infancy, exposed in a forest, suckled by a wild beast, and having been afterwards nursed by a shepherd's wife, grew up amid many trials and the most austere discipline. He at length succeeded in uniting the two powerful races of the Medes and Persians under his sway, and, at their head, pursued a sanguinary career of conquest, till defeated and slain by the Scythians. Their queen, Tamiris, had his head cut off and cast into a sack made of skin filled with human blood, while she said:—"Satiate thyself with that gore for which you had such a thirst, and with which you never could be sufficiently satiated." "Caput Cyri amputatum, in utrem humano sanguine repletum conjici regina jubet, cum hâc exprobatione crudelitatis,—'Satia te,' inquit, 'sanguine quem sitisti, cuiusque insatiabilis semper fuisti.'"^{*}

III. The empire of the Medes and Persians was overthrown, after a period of only two hundred and thirty-two years, by Alexander the Great, who with winged speed subdued all Asia and Egypt. His army was composed of the quotas from all the petty states of Greece. He had four great marshals; his half insane mind made him liable to inconstancy and the most violent transitions of feeling. After his death horrid wars arose about the succession, and his empire was torn into several principalities. Egypt fell to Ptolemy, Macedonia to Philip, otherwise called Aridæus, Syria and Babylonia to Nicanor, Asia Proper to Antigonus; Syria, Babylonia, and Asia Proper, were afterwards united under Antiochus Eupator.

IV. Previous to the birth of Christ, not only all these principalities and empires, but the entire of the then known world had been crushed and vanquished by the Romans, whose iron legions bore down and trampled upon all nations.

While in its pride, but yet with the elements of dissolution at work within its frame, this empire is invaded by a fisherman of Bethsaida at the head of twelve companions. He was called Peter, which is interpreted a *rock*. After four centuries the Roman em-

* *Justini Hist. I. i. c. viii.* The sketch is from Justin, the periods from the Chronology of Eusebius.

pire is overthrown and shattered to pieces ; the empire of the fishermen extended at that crisis over all nations : after the shocks and revolutions of nearly two thousand years, it has its subjects in every tribe and tongue of the human race.

The foregoing epitome of the succession of empires will assist the reader to appreciate as they deserve the following predictions. Let him observe with what exactness the prophet defines the order in which the empires succeed each other ; how he continued to add characteristic to characteristic, until the likeness of the type to the reality cannot be mistaken. Finally, let him note well how the revelations made at such distant periods to Daniel and to St. John are combined and dovetailed with each other, so as to form but one series.

Prophecies of Daniel concerning the rise and fall of the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman empires ; the empire of Christ to be erected upon their ruins, and to last for ever.

(CHAPTER II.)

IN the second year of the reign of Nebuchodonosor,* Nabuchodonosor had a dream, and his spirit was terrified, and his dream went out of his mind. Then the king commanded to call together the diviners and the wise men, and the magicians, and the Chaldeans, to declare to the king his dreams : so they came and stood before the king. And the king said to them :—“ I saw a dream, and being troubled in mind, I know not what I saw.” And the Chaldeans answered the king in Syriac :—“ O king, live for ever : tell to thy servants thy dream, and we will declare the interpretation thereof.” And the king answering, said to the Chaldeans :—“ The thing is gone out of my mind ; unless you tell me the dream, and the meaning thereof, you shall be put to death, and your houses shall be confiscated. But if you tell the dream, and the meaning of it, you shall receive of me rewards, and gifts and great honour ; therefore, tell me the dream, and the interpretation thereof.” They answered again and said, —“ Let the king tell his servants his dream, and we will declare the interpretation of it.” The king answered and said, —“ I know for certain that you seek to gain time, since you know that the thing is gone from me. If, therefore, you tell not the dream, there is one sentence concerning you, that you have also framed a lying interpretation, and full of deceit, to speak before me till the time pass away. Tell me therefore the dream, that I may know that you also give a true interpretation thereof.” Then the Chaldeans answered before the king and said, —“ There is no man upon earth that can accomplish thy word, O king, neither doth any king, though great and mighty, ask such a thing of any diviner, or wise man, or Chaldean. For the thing thou askest, O king, is difficult ; nor can any one be found that can

* A.M. 3401, A.C. 603.

show it before the king, except the gods, whose conversation is not with men."

Upon hearing this, the king in fury and great wrath commanded that all the wise men of Babylon should be put to death. And the decree being gone forth, the wise men were slain ; and Daniel and his companions were sought for, to be put to death. Then Daniel inquired concerning the law and the sentence of Arioch, the general of the king's army, who was gone forth to kill the wise men of Babylon. And he asked him that had received the orders of the king, why so cruel a sentence was gone forth from the face of the king. And when Arioch had told the matter to Daniel, Daniel went in and desired of the king, that he would give him time to resolve the question, and declare it to the king. And he went into his house, and told the matter to Ananias, and Misall and Azarius his companions ; to the end that they should ask mercy at the face of the God of heaven concerning this secret, and that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Then was the mystery revealed to Daniel by a vision in the night : and Daniel blessed the God of Heaven. And speaking, he said : Blessed be the name of the Lord from eternity and for evermore : for wisdom and fortitude are his. And he changeth times and ages : taketh away kingdoms and establisheth them, giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding. He revealeth deep and hidden things, and knoweth what is in darkness : and light is with him.* To thee, O God of our fathers, I give thanks, and I praise thee : because thou hast given me wisdom and strength : and now thou hast shewn me what we desired of thee, for thou hast made known to us the king's discourse. After this, Daniel went in to Arioch, to whom the king had given orders to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and he spoke thus to him : Destroy not the wise men of Babylon : bring me in before the king, and I will tell the solution to the king.

Then Arioch in haste brought in Daniel to the king, and said to him, I have found a man of the children of the captivity of Juda, that will resolve the question to the king. The king answered, and said to Daniel, whose name was Baltasser : Thinkest thou indeed that thou canst tell me the dream that I saw, and the interpretation thereof? And Daniel made answer befor the king, and said, The secret that the king desireth to know, none of the wise men, or the philosophers, or the diviners, or the soothsayers can declare to the king. But there is a God in heaven that revealeth mysteries, who hath shewn to thee, O King Nabuchodonosor, what is to come to pass in the latter times.† Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these :—

Thou, O king, didst begin to think in thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter : and he that revealeth mysteries shewed thee what

* 1 Cor. iv. 5. 1 John i. 6; John i. 9, and viii. 12.

† *i. e.* in the Christian era. The terms are synonymous in Scripture.

shall come to pass. To me also this secret is revealed, not by any wisdom that I have more than all men alive : but that the interpretation might be made manifest to the king, and thou mightest know the thoughts of thy mind. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold there was as it were a great statue, which was great and high, tall of stature, stood before thee, and the look thereof was terrible. The head of this statue was of fine gold, but the breast and *the arms** of silver, and the belly and the thighs of brass :† and *the legs of iron†* the *feet part of iron and part of clay.‡* Thus thou sawest, till a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands : and it struck the statue upon the feet that were of iron and of clay, and broke them in pieces.|| Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of a summer's thrashing-floor, and they were carried away by the wind : and there was no place found for them : but the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.¶

This is the dream : we will also tell the interpretation thereof before thee, O king. Thou art a king of kings ; and the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, and strength, and power, and glory : and all places wherein the children of men, and the beasts of the field do dwell ; he hath also given the birds of the air into thy hand, and hath put all things under thy power : thou, therefore, art the head of gold.** And after thee shall rise up another kingdom, *inferior to thee*, of silver ;†† and another third kingdom of brass, *which shall rule over all the world.††* And *the fourth kingdom shall be as iron.‡‡* As iron breaketh into pieces, and subdueth all things, so shall that break and destroy all these. And whereas thou sawest the feet, and the toes part of potter's clay, and part of iron : *the kingdom shall be divided,|| ||* but yet it shall take its origin from the iron, according as thou sawest the iron mixed with the miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, the kingdom shall be *partly strong, and partly broken.¶¶* And whereas

* The two arms, the Medes and Persians, forming one empire.

† Emblematical of the far sounding fame of Alexander the Great, and of Greek eloquence.—S. Hier.

‡ Republican Rome.

§ Rome under the emperors, or as it was when the kingdom or church built on the rock began to assault it.

|| "Simon, son of John, thou shalt be called a Rock : and on this rock," &c. Words of Christ to St. Peter.

¶ On the empire of Peter the sun of heaven never sets.

** The first empire, "the head of gold," founded by Ninus, A.M. 3141, extended over all Asia, except India, and according to Eusebius, lasted for 1240, according to another reading, 1260 years.

†† The Medes and Persians were far more limited in territory, and reigned only 232 years.

†† Who has not heard how Alexander wept for *other worlds* to conquer ?

‡‡ Mark the type of the Roman legions, "the men of iron."—Byron.

||| To the partition of the empire, first by Dioclesian, then by Constantine, &c., historians are *unanimous* in assigning the chief agency in the enfeebled and downfall of the Roman empire.—See Gibbon in particular.

¶¶ While the west fell, the east sustained itself much longer, through the policy of Constantine : "but," &c. The Turks.

thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall be mingled indeed together with the seed of man, *but they shall not stick fast one to another*, as iron cannot be mixed with clay. But *in the days of those kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed*,* and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people, and it shall break in pieces, and shall consume all these kingdoms, *and itself shall stand for ever*.† According as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and broke in pieces the clay and the iron, and the brass, and the silver, and the gold, the great God hath shewn the king what shall come to pass hereafter, and the dream is true, and the interpretation thereof is faithful.

Then the king Nabuchodonosor fell on his face,‡ and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer in sacrifice to him victims and incense. And the king spoke to Daniel, and said:—“Verily your God is the God of gods, and Lord of kings, and a revealer of hidden things; seeing thou couldst discover this secret.”

But, in order to leave no room for doubt, concerning the relation in which the kingdom of Christ was to stand to the succession of pagan empires, the Almighty vouchsafed to exhibit the same grand series and drama of human history to his prophet in a vision, if possible, still more sublime and accurately definite.—*Cap. ii.*

The same subject, sketched under other images, and more fully developed in its characteristic features.

In the first year of Baltasser, king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream: and the vision of his head was upon his bed: and writing the dream, he comprehended it in few words: and relating the sum of it in short, he said:—

“I saw in my vision by night, and behold the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.§ And four great beasts, different one from another, came up out of the sea. The first was like a lioness, and had the wings of an eagle: *I beheld till her wings were plucked off, and she was lifted up from the earth, and stood upon*

* The immediate preparations for the coming of the Messiah, and for the founding of his kingdom, commenced under Cyrus, who restored the Jews, and forwarded the re-building of the temple: they proceeded still more briskly under the Greek empire when the Septuagint version of the ancient Scripture began to prepare the nations for the gospel.—See Euseb. *Præf. Evang.*; and Bossuet, *Hist. Univer.*, &c.

† “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and, behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” Words of our Lord concerning the church built on Peter.

‡ Because he at once recognised the dream, which in his terror he had forgotten: and the inspired interpretation of the prophet flashed conviction on his mind.

§ Empires of Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans.

*her feet as a man, and the heart of a man was given to her.** And behold another beast, *like a bear,†* stood up on one side: and there were three rows in the mouth thereof, and in the teeth thereof, and thus they said to it: *Arise, devour much flesh.‡* After this I beheld, and lo, another *like a leopard,* and it had upon it *four wings* as of a fowl, and the beast had four heads, and power was given to it.§ After this I beheld in the vision of the night, and lo, a fourth beast,|| terrible and wonderful, and exceeding strong, it had great iron teeth, eating and breaking in pieces, and treading down the rest with its feet: and it was unlike to the other beasts which I had seen before it, and had *ten horns.¶* I considered the horns, and behold *another little horn*** sprung out of the midst of them: and three of the first horns were plucked up at the presence thereof: and behold eyes like the eyes of a man were in this horn, and a mouth *speaking great things.††*

I beheld till thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat: his garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like clean wool: his throne like flames of fire: the wheels of it like a burning fire. A swift stream of fire issued forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him: the judgment sat and the books were opened. I beheld because of the voice of the great words which that horn spoke: and I saw that the beast was slain,††† and the body thereof was destroyed, and given to the fire to be burnt: and that the power of the other beasts was taken away: and that times of life were appointed them for a time and a time. I beheld therefore in the vision of the night, and lo, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and he came even to the Ancient of Days: and they presented him before him. And he gave him power, and glory, and a kingdom: and all peoples, tribes, and tongues shall serve him: his power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away: and his kingdom shall not be destroyed. My spirit trembled, I Daniel was affrighted at these things, and the visions of my head troubled me. I went near to one of them that stood by, and asked the truth of him concerning all these things, and he told me the interpretation of the words, and instructed me. *These four great beasts are four kingdoms,* which

* Babylon, represented by Nebuchadnezzar, who underwent a transformation just similar to that described in the text. See Daniel, ch. iv. 33, &c.

† Persia, in allusion to the savage infancy of Cyrus and the Persian austerity of manners.

‡ See the apostrophe of Queen Tamiris to the head of Cyrus.

§ The Greeks, the many spotted animal, emblematic of the many petty states, and of the versatility of Alexander, &c. &c.

|| Rome.

¶ For the history of the "ten horns," see Apocal. ch. xvii. 12, explained in the body of this work.

** Julian.

†† St. John seems to take up the prophecy at this point, and to describe the destinies of the church to the end. See Apocal. c. 4, et seq.

††† Destruction of pagan Rome.

shall arise out of the earth, [whereas, the empire of the Messiah, the church, is from heaven.] But the saints of the most high God shall take the kingdom :* and they shall possess the kingdom for ever and ever. After this I would diligently learn concerning the fourth beast,† which was very different from all, and exceeding terrible : his teeth and claws were of iron : he devoured and broke in pieces, and the rest he stamped upon with his feet. And concerning the ten horns that he had on his head : and concerning the other that came up, before which three horns fell : and of the horn that had eyes, and a mouth speaking great things, and was greater than the rest. I beheld, and lo, that horn made war against the saints, and prevailed over them—(as Julian appeared to do. The holy fathers agree that his persecution was the most formidable of all, and immense numbers apostatized) ;—till the Ancient of Days came and gave judgment to the saints of the Most High, and the time came, and the saints obtained the kingdom. And thus he said : the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth,‡ which shall be greater than all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns of the same kingdom, shall be ten kings.§ and another shall rise up after them,|| and he shall be mightier than the former, and he shall bring down three kings. And he shall speak words against the High One, (Christ,) and shall crush the saints of the Most High : and he shall think himself able to change times and laws, and they shall be delivered into his hand until a time, and times, and half a time. And judgment shall sit, that his power may be taken away and be broken in pieces, and perish even to the end.¶ And that the kingdoms, and power, and greatness of the kingdoms, under the whole heaven, may be given to the people of the saints of the Most High : whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all kings shall serve him, and shall obey him. *Hitherto is the end of the world.*** I Daniel was much troubled with my thoughts, and my countenance was changed in me : but I kept the word in my heart.”††—Cap. vii.

* The church of Christ.

† Rome.

‡ Rome.

§ From Nero to Diocletian ten persecutors. It may also mean Diocletian and his colleagues. Julian, more mighty because sole emperor of the Roman world, flourishing till he brought ruin on it.

|| Julian the apostate, who succeeded the three sons of Constantine the Great. He reigned only three years and a half. He was never done blaspheming the Saviour of the world, for whom he had no name but “the Galilean.” He died blaspheming. He also boasted that he would prove Christ to be a false prophet, by causing the Jewish temple to be rebuilt.

¶ Paganism had its last triumph under Julian. It struggled to the last, but the arrow that wounded Julian pierced its heart.

** Behold I am with you to the consummation of the world, &c.

†† Nothing can be more striking than the exact coincidence between what is here foretold of Julian, by the prophet Daniel, and what is predicted of him by St. John in the 13th ch. of the Apocalypse. After describing Diocletian and his six persecuting colleagues, ver. 1, 2, and having stated in ver. 3, that paganism seemed to have received its death blow, on the triumph of the cross under Constantine, St. John beheld the

APPENDIX C.

Portrait of St. Paul; Battle between a Roman legion and the Britons under Queen Boadicea.

“Erat Paulus corpore mediocri: naso ad votum Pesarum, quod augustum in regibus credunt, adunco et longiori, albo colore, hilari oculo, supercilium humi demisso, raro capillo, barba densiore et promissa, pulchra et decorat facie; et in se unumquemque trahente; ad haec acri vehementer ingenio, praeclaro animo et in ardua prono.”—*Vid. Act. Sanct. tom. vi. Junii, die 29th, p. 17.*

“Jam Suetonio quartadecima legio cum vexillariis vicesimani, et e proximis auxiliariis, decem ferme millia armatorum erant; cum omittere cunctationem et congregari acie parat; deligitque locum arctis faucibus et a tergo silvâ clausum; satis cognito, nihil hostium, nisi in fronte, et apertam planitiem esse, sine metu insidiarum. Igitur legionarius frequens ordinibus, levis circum armatura, conglobatus pro cornibus eques adstilit. At Brittanorum copiae passim per catervas et turmas exsultabant, quanta non alias multitudo, et animo adeo fero, ut conjuges quoque testes victoriae secum traherent, plaustrisque imponerent, quae super extremum ambitum campi posuerant.

“Boadicea, curru filias præ se vehens, ut quamque nationem accesserat, solitum quidem Britannis feminarum ductu bellare, testabatur:

prostrate monster revived in greater force and pride than ever (ver. 3, 4.) Such was the case with paganism under Julian. He then says, ver. 5—“And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies”—the very words used by Daniel. Again, Daniel gives only “a time and times and half a time,” i. e. a brief span. St. John gives only “forty and two months,” exactly three years and a half, a time, and times, and half a time. In ver. 7, St. John repeats what Daniel had said, “that he should prevail over the saints,” or the followers of the Lamb, the Apocalyptic title of Christ our Lord. Daniel represents the Eternal instituting judgment, that the power of Julian “may be taken away, and that the kingdom may be given to the people of the saints.” The same is said by St. John, xiv. 1. But St. John adds several luminous strokes to the sketch of the apostate as Daniel left it. In ver. 10, he apprises the Christians of the mode of his death: he then adumbrates his attempt, by the aid of Platinus and Porphyry, leaders of the Neo-Platonicians, to plagiarize Christianity. “I beheld,” he says, “another beast,” a new edition of paganism improved and corrected by the borrowed, or rather plundered lights of the gospel, ‘coming up out of the earth,’ (the philosophy of the pagans as opposed to faith ‘being of the earth earthly,’) and this other (new fashioned) beast had two horns like a lamb, and he spake like a dragon.” Platinus and Porphyry, and their school, the new Platonics, put on the guise of Christianity—the religion of the Lamb of God; and under this disguise blasphemed the Lamb, they spoke a dragon—as Satan inspired them. The succeeding verses are a graphic description of the mode of proceeding in the persecution under Julian. This is but one of many evidences which might be adduced to establish the connection between the prophecy of Daniel and that of St. John. In the two united we possess a grand and consecutive representation, as if in a series of dramatic scenes, of the destinies of the church.

Daniel is commanded, ch. viii. 26, “to seal the prophecy, because it was not to happen for a long time.” St. John beholds the breaking of these seals and the reopening of the great volume of prophecy to be completed by himself; and he is desired *not* to seal the book, the time of its fulfilment being at hand.—Apoc. xxii. 10.

sed tunc non, ut tantis majoribus ortam, regnum et opes, verum ut unam e vulgo libertatem amissam, confectum verberibus corpus, contrectatam filiarum pudicitiam ulcisci: eo proiectas Romanorum cupidines, ut non corpora, ne senectam quidem, aut virginitatem impollutam relinquant. Adesse tamen deos justæ vindictæ: cecidisse legionem, quæ prælium ausa sit: cæteros castris occultari, aut fugam circumspicere. Ne strepitum quidem et clamorem tot milium, nedum impetus et manus perlatus. Si copias armatorum, si causas belli secum expenderent, vincendum illâ acie, vel cadendum esse. Id mulieri destinatum: viverent viri, et servirent.

“Ne Suetonius quidem in tanto discrimine silebat: qui, quamquam confideret virtuti, tamen exhortationes et preces miscebat, ut spernarent sonores barbarorum, et inanes minas; plus illic feminarum, quam juventutis adspici: imbelles, inermes cessuros statim, ubi ferrum virtutemque vincentium toties fusi agnovissent: etiam in multis legionibus paucos esse, qui prælia profligarent: gloriæque eorum accessurum, quod modica manus universæ exercitûs famam adispicerentur. Conferti tantum, et pilis emissis, post umbonibus et gladiis, stragem cædemque continuarent, prædæ immemores: partâ victoria, cuncta ipsis cessura. Is ardor verba ducis sequebatur, ita se ad intorquenda pila expedieret vetus miles et multâ præliorum experientia, ut, certus eventûs, Suetonius daret pugnæ signum.

“Ac primum legio gradu immota, et augustias loci pro munito retinens, postquam proprius suggestus hostis certo jactu tela exhauserat, velut cuneo erupit, idem auxiliarium impetus: et eques, protentis hastis, perfringit, quod obvium et validum erat. Cæteri terga præbuere, difficili effugio, quia circumjecta vehicula sepserant abitus. Et miles ne mulierum quidem neci temperabat; confixaque telis etiam jumenta corporum cumulum auxerant. Clara et antiquis victoriis par eâ die laus parta: quippe sunt, qui paulo minus quam octoginta millia Brittanorum cecidisse tradant, militum quadringentis ferme intefectis, nec multo amplius vulneratis. Boadicea vitam veneno finivit, et Pænius Postumus, præfector castorum secundæ legionis, cognitis quartadecimanorum vicesimanorumque prosperis rebus, quia par gloriâ legionem suam fraudaverat, abnueratque, contra ritum militiæ, jussa ducis, se ipsum gladio transegit.”—*Tacit. Annalium, lib. xiv. c. 34—37.*

APPENDIX D.

A sketch from original sources, of the manners and customs of the primitive Christians.

From its earliest promulgation, Christ's kingdom had numbered amongst its subjects, individuals of all ranks and pursuits in life.

They were found in the court, in the camp, in the liberal professions; but the lowliest and most forgotten of society, slaves, artizans, the weaker sex, and those on whom devolved the weight of drudgery in town and country, formed such an overwhelming majority in the church, that the few exceptions were overlooked; and the Christians were stigmatized with epithets significant of mean and contemptible occupations, and reviled continually, at least for the first two centuries, as being an aggregate of the lowest dregs, ignorant, imbecile, lost to fame and patriotism, and in every respect despicable, and deserving of execration. They laboured in all the mechanic trades intermingled with the heathens; exposed their wares and productions with theirs in the common markets; but, although there were painters, sculptors, engravers, and workers in the precious metals, at all times among the Christians, still for the first two centuries they were rather averse than otherwise to the cultivation of the fine arts, on account of their remote or immediate connection with paganism.

To sign his forehead with the cross was the Christian's first act on awakening before the dawn: he repeated this *royal sign* (as it was called in those ages) before commencing to dress. His costume differed in nothing from that usually worn by persons of the same rank with himself, except that it was always in keeping with that modesty and freedom from ostentation which characterised his entire bearing and conduct wherever he appeared. The pallium was generally preferred to the toga, it being the garb of philosophers, and those of a grave and ascetic turn. As to the females, they were equally free from vanity and display; at the same time that they conformed in their style of dress to the fashion of the circle and time in which they lived, and a moderate degree of ornament was not rejected either by matrons or the unmarried.

Having dressed and carefully washed both face and hands, not through superstition, but for sake of a bodily cleanliness which he was taught to regard as an emblem of that mental purity which he was ever bound to cherish, the Christian, again signing himself with the cross, commenced his morning prayer—adoring the Divine Majesty, and giving thanks for having been preserved during sleep, and brought, invigorated by repose, to the beginning of a new day. If there were many of the faithful in the same house, they assembled together for this prayer, which was recited by the father of the family, unless some one of the clerical condition happened to be present. This was called the *matin prayer*, but it was afterwards called “*lauds*,” because it consisted for the most part of psalms and hymns of *praise*. The Christian's posture was indicative of reverential feeling and fervour while he prayed. On Sundays, and during paschal time, or from Easter day to Pentecost, he prayed standing erect, (to remind him of the resurrection,) with eyes elevated towards heaven, and arms extended, like those of his Saviour on the cross, and always looking towards the East; for, as the orient splendours disperse the shades of night, and illuminate the world; so did the appearance of his Divine Master “the orient

from on high," dispel the darkness of sin, and enlighten those who sat in the shadow of death.

His matin-prayer concluded with outpourings of glory to God on high; the Christian again made the sign of the cross; and, issuing from his abode, with meek countenance and recollected step, proceeded to the church, or in seasons of persecution, to some crypt or catacomb, to assist at the Divine mysteries. He did not enter the holy place till he had first performed another lustration at a fountain of holy water in the atrium. This was done not for bodily neatness, for the Christian never came to church with soiled hands or face, but as a sign of the spotless purity he should bring into the Divine presence; and having once entered the church or oratory, he took care not to depart until the class of the congregation to which he belonged had been formally dismissed.

After the appointed prayers and hymns, portions of the Old and New Testament were recited, and the bishop, or a priest appointed by him, delivered a homily or familiar discourse, in which he expounded what had been read, and enforced its edifying examples and lessons of virtue by fervent exhortations; then followed the prayers for the catechumens, and the classes of penitents permitted to come beyond the atrium, and into the first division of the nave. This portion of the service, called the mass of catechumens, was terminated by the "ite missa est," or a proclamation, by a deacon, to the unbaptized and penitents to withdraw.

When they had done so, under the inspection of the subdeacons and ostiarii, or those who had charge of the doors, the faithful approached the altar with their offerings of bread and wine. The oblation ended, the bishop, or priest, appointed to celebrate, having washed his hands while reciting a prayer, and then kissed the altar, made the offertory, or act of presenting to the heavenly Father, with appropriate prayer, that portion of the bread and wine prepared from the offerings, by the deacon, for the purposes of sacrifice. The latter was careful to pour some drops of water into the chalice, in conformity with the example of our Lord and his apostles, before he presented it to the celebrant. Some other prayers having been recited, the bishop said, elevating his hands, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." And the people having responded that it was just and right so to do; he commenced the preface, or, as the Greeks called it, the triumphal hymn, somewhat to the following effect:—

"Verily it is meet, just, equitable, and salutary, that always, and everywhere, we give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, Father Omnipotent, Eternal God, through Christ our Lord,—through whom the angels praise thy Majesty, the dominations adore, the powers celestial tremble, and the entire heavens, with their mighty spirits and the blessed seraphim, exult, and with one voice entone and celebrate their canticles of adoration. With whom we implore that our voices also may be commanded to unite in accents of supplication."

At these words the choir, joined by the whole congregation, took up the angelic hymn:—

“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth, full are the heavens and the earth of thy glory, Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest!” that is, “We hail Thee,—Thee we supplicate, who art in the highest heavens.”

Then commenced the *canon*, or, as it was sometimes called, the *action* of the sacrifice, during which the celebrant frequently made the sign of the cross over the bread and wine about to be changed, by the word of our Lord, into his own most adorable body and blood. After imploring peace, union, and the aid of Heaven upon the church, and recommending to the Divine favour the various ranks of the hierarchy, of the faithful, and of all not yet aggregated to the fold; and having commemorated the holy apostles and saints, the awful words of consecration (as they are set down by St. Paul) were pronounced first over the bread, and then over the chalice, according to the Divine institution. Then, after other prayers, commemorative of the passion, death, and resurrection, and ascension of our Lord, and the memento for the dead, or prayer for the souls of the faithful departed, the priest recited aloud the “*pater noster*,” or Lord’s prayer. The *pax*, or kiss of peace, followed, when the male portion of the congregation, placed in the aisle to the right of the entrance, embraced each other in token of mutual forgiveness, and fraternal charity; and the females did the same, in their own portion of the church, which was in the left aisle, and separated from that of the men by the nave,—allotted to catechumens and penitents, and by the chancel, or choir, immediately before the altar; while the clergy performed this holy ceremony as they stood, according to their rank, on either side of the bishop’s throne placed in the absis, and immediately in front of the altar steps.

After the communion of the celebrant, the deacons sung: “Come taste and see how sweet the Lord is.” This being an invitation to all (for in those days no Christian came to the Divine mysteries, but with a pure conscience,) to partake of the blessed eucharist. Having adored and received the blessed sacrament, repeating “Amen,” when the priest or deacon said, “Behold the body of Christ,” the Christian devoutly abided the rest of the Liturgic prayers, and, having made his thanksgiving, returned in deep recollection to his dwelling. And so early did the Christians rise, and such was the admirable punctuality and order of the Divine offices (called *ante-lucanæ*, from being celebrated before the dawn,) that the Christian was ever among the first at his peculiar trade or avocation, to which he applied, having as usual signed himself with the cross. But if a father, or one having guardianship of others, he took care first to instruct his children and dependants in the points of the sermon or discourse he had heard, and in the Christian doctrine generally.

A little before noon the labourer or the artizan suspended his task, and the housewife and the handmaid their domestic employments,

and the short interval before the midday repast was given to a rayer, a hymn, and a lecture, (called *sext*, because said at the sixth hour,) that the soul as well as the body might have its proper aliment, and that fervour, so liable to fall away, might be invigorated. All were taught to meditate during their occupations, or to relax the mind, and beguile time with pious songs, but no disedifying expression, or one that did not savour of truth and virtue, ever escaped their lips.

Before reclining at table, some one, the father of the family, unless in presence of a priest or cleric, used to make the sign of the cross over the viands, the water and wine, repeating a brief prayer. Instead of voluptuous music and indecencies, in which the pagans delighted, a chorus of young voices shed an angelic charm over the Christian's refection; and when they pledged each other, the cup was signed with the cross, and the name of Christ invoked. After the thanksgiving, they entertained one another for a while with hymns, or in listening while one read from the sacred volume. Then instead of indulging in sloth, or giving a loose rein to the passions, they either resumed their occupations as before, or betook them, during the quiet time when the pagans lay buried in debauchery or sleep, to visit and console the captive and confessors in prison, to welcome pilgrims and wash their feet, supplying them with every entertainment, or in carrying alms to widows and orphans in their distress.

Nones, a form of prayer like those appointed for the first, third, and sixth, was recited at three o'clock, the *ninth* hour of the day. If a field labourer, or one whose craft called him from his own house, the Christian on returning at even-tide to his family, was surrounded by his children, to whom he dispensed instruction mingled with the fervour of his own glowing heart; and after a frugal supper sanctified and cheered by rites and canticles, and inspired lessons similar to those of dinner-time, serene in mind, at peace with himself, with his neighbour and with Heaven, he made the royal sign over his lowly bed, and sought repose under the same auspices he had invoked in the beginning of the day.

Nor was his Saviour left without his tribute even from the long hours of darkness; the Christian rose at midnight, and gave some time to holy vigils and a prayer called the *nocturns* (*ad nocturnas*). In short, regarding himself as a soldier of Christ,—called to contend against the world, the flesh, and the devil,—he deemed it his duty to be on the alert continually. It was held presumptuous for one so fragile not to recommend himself by frequent prayer to the Divine protection; not to stand upon his guard against the stratagems and hostilities that beset him on all sides. Moreover, “every day,” says Clement of Alexandria, “being, for us, a festival, and persuaded as we are that God is everywhere, praising we adore Him, whether voyaging by sea or land; whether engaged in handicraft or professional pursuits; we dedicate the honourable use of all things to the Giver of all good, and return him thanks for his infinite bounty, convinced that we are under the eye, and present to

the mind of his divinity at every instant." Hence wherever he was found, in the senate, in the public baths, in the forum, or on the tented field, (he kept aloof from the circus and theatres as from so many temples of heathenism,) at the loom, the anvil, the quern, or in whatsoever station he had been fixed by Providence, the Christian became conspicuous for the integrity of his morals, and wrung even from his persecutors the confession, that his life corresponded with the arduous code which he professed.

Like an army halting upon the march to be reviewed, every Wednesday and Friday the soldiers of Christ made *station*, that is, there was a muster of the congregation at some appointed church or oratory, where a longer time than ordinary was spent in self-examination, in prayer, penitential tears, and the confession of sins, joined with fasting and other austerities. The day following the Jewish sabbath—dedicated by heathens to the worship of the *sun*—was a day of rest and great solemnity with the Christians; because on it their Saviour had arisen from the dead—opening for his disciples the gate of immortality—and hence it was called *dominica* or the *Lord's day*. Its vigil, or eve, Saturday, was observed by the Roman Christians as a day of abstinence, or as they called it then—a *half fast*.

But Easter day was the greatest festival of the Christian year. For a long time the Christians of the East used to celebrate it on the Jewish passover, no matter on what day of the week it fell; but, ultimately, the universal church conformed to the Roman usage instituted by St. Peter; to keep the anniversary of our Lord's resurrection on the *Sunday following the fifteenth of the moon of March*. They prepared themselves for its celebration by a rigorous fast of forty days. The week immediately preceding it was called the great week, because the greatest blessings had been conceded to mortals during those days in which the world's redemption was achieved. It was entirely given to penitential austerities, meditation, prayer, and rigid fasts, and, as if to indicate the effulgence the rising Saviour had shed upon the world, the night preceding the great festival was illuminated with torches, so as almost to rival the brilliancy of the noon day.

With nearly equal devotion and signs of holy jubilee, the feasts of the Nativity, of Pentecost, and Epiphany—called the day of sacred illumination by the Greeks—were celebrated; as also the anniversaries of the martyrs and saints; and whenever the festivals of two saints fell on the same day, after assisting at the divine offices of the liturgy in one church or oratory, the faithful hastened to the shrine of the other servant of God, to offer up their vows, and assist at the holy sacrifice.

In seasons of persecution these solemnities were held in the catacombs, or in crypts under ground; and hence the Christians were stigmatized by their heathen persecutors as "a crew of conspirators, fond of darkness, lurking in dens, and afraid of the light."

An anecdote told by that scoffer Lucian shows what a tender charity reigned among the Christians. Speaking of an infamous impostor who pretended to be a Christian, he thus goes on in the

dialogue of the pilgrim :—" This villain being cast into prison, it was regarded by the whole Christian community as a calamity in which each of them was concerned, and they spared no effort or sacrifice to procure his liberation, in order to bring him to their own houses. But seeing that all was to no effect, they determined to minister to him in his dungeon every rite of hospitality, with more than ordinary assiduity and diligence. Whereupon, you might have seen old crones, widows, and orphan children, resorting to the prison, from earliest morn to dewy eve ; and not only these, but those also among the followers of Jesus Christ, who were of a better condition, (priests to offer the holy sacrifice,) who contrived by bribing the gaolers to get in and minister consolation to the impostor, passing whole nights with him in his captivity, without ever suspecting what a precious saint he was. They prepared supper for him, and read to him from these books which they called sacred. Nay, more, they brought large supplies of money to the imprisoned pilgrim, who thus drove a fine trade upon the simplicity of these fools, who believe themselves immortal, and on that account contemn not only all earthly substance, but death itself." They deemed it a sacred duty of religion to visit those who were prisoners especially for the faith, and to kiss the fetters with which their limbs were burdened for Christ's sake ; priests found means to penetrate into the dungeons of the captive, that, even amidst his guards, he might enjoy the ineffable delight of assisting at the holy sacrifice, and of being consoled and strengthened by the sacraments. In short, they were upbraided with the folly of receiving with open arms the stranger whom they had never seen before, merely because he was a disciple of Christ ; and the Gentiles were constantly forced to exclaim, " See these Christians, how they love one another ! "

But it was in seasons of public calamity, as when cities were struck with pestilence, that the magnanimity and lustre of the Christian shone forth in all its lustre.

" Many and bitter were the calamities which we had to suffer," says St. Dionysius of Alexandria, " before this terrible plague fell on Egypt, which it has filled with lamentations like those that resounded through the land, when all the first-born were slain in one night. In the first place, we were hunted from the cities ; but although harassed, persecuted, and oppressed by all, nevertheless we celebrated the sacred festivals. In whatever place we happened to be, beset as we were, on all sides, with innumerable and distressing trials, whether in the fields or in the wilderness, cooped up in miserable barks upon the waters, in stables, or in prison, still every place was to us a temple, where we solemnized the Divine mysteries with every accustomed rite. But oh, how incomparably more resplendent the festivals celebrated in heaven by our brethren, when its gates had been opened to them by martyrdom ?

" These events were followed by a famine which afflicted the entire province, and by a war, of which the calamities were common to us and to the Gentiles ; but it pleased Christ Jesus our Saviour that the peace which succeeded should be conceded to us alone. Scarcely

had we and our persecutors commenced to breathe a little from the late terrors and disasters, when a plague broke out, which proved terrible and destructive beyond all description to our enemies. To our people it caused little loss and less apprehension, serving rather as an incentive to fervour and an opportunity by which the virtue of each party was to be put to the test. Many were the Christians who found themselves inspired by their singular and ardent charity to form themselves into companies in order to visit and succour the victims of the plague : and while, heedless of their own safety, they procured every aid, and did all that was possible to solace their patients, not a few of them caught the contagion and gloriously expired, joyful to partake in miseries they could not remedy, and to teach the Gentiles how to suffer patiently by their example. Several who had saved others from death, sunk under the exhaustion brought on by toil and assiduity, and thus passed to their reward from this vale of tears and misery. Thus did many of our most holy brethren cease to live, amongst whom were a number of lay persons full of devout zeal, besides the priests and deacons ; and their death, occasioned by their piety and charity, would seem deserving to be compared to martyrdom. On perceiving any one about to expire, during their attendance on the plague-struck multitude, they hastened with every manifestation of affection and sympathy to where lay the sufferer, and stooping down, consoled him in his agony, mingling fervent exhortations to induce the departing soul to seek help and forgiveness from the Lord of mercies. When the spirit had winged its flight, with touching piety they closed the eyes and mouth, and lifting the dead body on their shoulders carried it to a convenient place, where they washed it ; and this ceremony ended, they enveloped it in its shroud, embraced it tenderly, and finally carried it to the grave.

“ Entirely different was the conduct of the Gentiles, for as soon as any were perceived to be struck with the plague, no matter how near and dear the objects by ties of kindred or affection, they cast the wretched being forth from their houses, and then left them to perish in the streets, regardless of their cries and agonies ; and when they beheld their bodies lying dead, they durst not give them the rites of burial, fearful of catching the contagion, and thus expose themselves to death ; which, however, with all their precautions they were unable to escape.” But, to complete the picture, the details omitted by St. Dionysius must be supplied from St. Cyprian ; reproaching the pagans of Carthage, for their conduct during a pestilence similar to that with which Alexandria was visited. “ Cowards,” he says, “ in discharging the duties of piety, yet audacious in securing an impious plunder : shrinking from scenes of mortality, yet panting for the spoils of the dead, it would seem that they desert the poor sufferers in their decay, that no chance may be left of their recovery and restoration. He who invades the wealth of the dying, can have no wish for his return to health. This dreadful and multiplied havoc has not been able to unteach men their wickedness, and amid the heaps swept down on every side by death, no one

seems to dream that he is himself mortal. Pillage, rapine, taking possession of the property of the dead and dying, in every quarter the spoiler hides nothing, hesitates never; but as if he might, as if he ought, as if *not* to rob were doing damage and injustice to himself, each hurries to the spoil. In general, robbers have some sense of their ill-deeds; they haunt inaccessible passes and desert wastes, and seek to perpetrate their misdeeds under the shades of night; but during the raging pestilence, rapacity prowls in open day, and, without check or fear of justice, exercises its licence through the forums and streets of Carthage."

While, among the pagans, the most sacred ties of humanity were thus cruelly rent asunder for lucre's sake, the goods of this world formed a bond of brotherhood between the Christians, who freely participated with their needy brethren all over the world, not only what they possessed by inheritance, but all that they could earn by hard labour. "Each of us," says Tertullian, "contributes so much a month. A voluntary offering according to his means. For no one gives by compulsion, but every one of his own accord. These contributions are so many deposits made by piety, they are confided to the administration of the bishop, or chief presbyter of the congregation. Nor is it in banqueting or revelry these funds are spent, but to feed the poor, the orphan, young creatures exposed to infamy by their own parents, the aged, the shipwrecked mariner, those condemned to the mines, those who pine in prison, in exile: in a word, for all who suffer for the Christian faith, and also for the pious interment of the dead."

"In our brethren taken captive and reduced to slavery," says St. Cyprian, "we all feel bound to recognise that Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, who resides in his servants, and to contribute by large sums of this world's dross to liberate from barbarian hands him, who squandered his own most precious blood upon the cross to liberate our souls from death and the jaws of perdition. And oh, how intense ought the common anguish to be—how lively our apprehensions for those pure and spotless daughters of the church, who have fallen into the power of rude and lawless hordes, lest it be our doom to mourn the loss not only of their freedom, but of their virginity? On this account, our brethren here, having taken into consideration and examined the contents of your letter, promptly, and with cheerfulness, contributed a much larger amount than could have been expected; for, inflamed by the sight of so pitiable a disaster, their charity added redoubled force to that disposition to every good work which springs from their firm and lively faith. Our collection amounted to one hundred thousand sesterces, which I now send you, that, with your wonted diligence, they may be disposed of for the advantage of our poor brethren, the slaves."

APPENDIX E.

Concerning the primitive heresies, Simoniacal, Jewish, and Gnostic. Their numbers, classes, distinctive theories, relations to the church, to the apostolic writings, &c.

The convictions and the fervour, excited by the first announcement of the Gospel, seemed to run through the world like a stroke of electricity. It became evident, that many causes had been long in effectual, though unheeded, operation, to prepare the world for its reception. Vast numbers seemed to awaken suddenly, as if from some fatal trance, at the first sounds of the apostolic voice ; and the wonders they announced seemed to flash a sudden and irresistible conviction. Society, especially in Syria and the surrounding countries, became agitated to its very depths, by this heavenly Spirit which swept over its long stagnant surface. The divine fire scattered by the apostles enkindled a flame that spread like lightning. Scarcely have they commenced their career, when already an immense number of churches, or societies of Christians, are seen rising in every direction. In Jerusalem, throughout all Judea and Samaria, at Antioch, in Ephesus, through the Asiatic and Greek cities, the messengers of this new revelation had their triumphs ; multitudes were carried away by them from the synagogue and the idol altars, to devote themselves with enthusiasm to the new faith ; they were recognised and venerated as the accredited envoys of the Divinity ; their disciples, in their fervour, did not hesitate even to sell all they had, and cast the price thereof at their feet for the common interests and advancement of Christianity. What wonder that, at a time when impostors, magicians, and charlatans of all descriptions, abounded more, and were more sought after by all orders, than ever they were before or since,—that many of this tribe should have eagerly seized upon the general excitement as affording a golden opportunity to advance their sordid interests. The renown of the apostles, of their preaching, and of their miracles, had already filled the world ; wherever the preachers of this “new sect, so much contradicted everywhere”—everywhere the theme of so much discussion and intense interest,—wherever they made their appearance they attracted multitudes. Hence in the track of the true, there came a tribe of “lying teachers, bringing in sects of perdition, through covetousness,” sordid and sacrilegious impostors, who laboured, and exhausted their ingenuity, “to make merchandise of the faithful.”

Wherever the apostles turn their eyes, towards the close of their career, they behold, with alarm and indignation, the disseminators of wicked impostures busily engaged all over the wide field of their labours, but more particularly in the East and in Greece. “ Beware of dogs !” cries out St. Paul to the Christians of Philippi, “ beware of evil-workers, beware of the concision ; for many walk of whom I told you often, and now tell you weeping,” (on account of the ruin they

were spreading,) "that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ" (however loudly they may profess the contrary); "whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly; whose glory is in their shame; *who mind earthly things.*" The Colossians he admonishes against another class of seducers who strove "to cheat by philosophy and vain deceit,"—deducing religion not from the dogmas delivered by Christ to his apostles, but from the traditions of the schools of Plato and Pythagoras, and from "the elements of the world," working out by a system of physical analysis a species of pantheism to which they gave the name of Christianity. They became puffed up with the imaginary combination they had effected between the revelation of Christ and the reveries of oriental dreamers, and introduced their theories concerning successive generations of angels, or eons, all *in order to get rid of the mystery of the incarnation, which they held to be an absurdity, if taken in the literal sense:* holding that the strong expressions of Scripture were only a mere veil for the true Gnostic, or *esoteric*, sense.

After describing the odious features of these heretics, who were to spread themselves, ere long, like scorpion-swarms over the vine-yard of the Lord, the apostle says to the bishop of Ephesus, his beloved disciple Timothy, "Now these avoid! for of this sort are they who" (at the present time) "creep into houses, and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, who are led away with divers desires,—*ever learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth.*" In that epistle, which he directed from Rome to the universal church, shortly before his martyrdom, the prince of the apostles denounces these pests, and warns the faithful against them. "These," he says, "are fountains without water and clouds tossed with whirlwinds, for whom the mist of darkness is reserved. Speaking proud words of vainglory, they allure by the desire of fleshly riotousness. *Promising liberty* (from the salutary restraints of Christ's commandments), they make their dupes the bond slaves of every passion." "Better for them," concludes St. Peter, "not to have known the way of justice, than after they have known it, to turn back from that holy commandment which was delivered to them. For that of the true proverb *has happened* in them: The dog is returned to his vomit; and, the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

"Dearly beloved," says St. Jude, "taking all care to write unto you of your common salvation, I was under a necessity to write unto you, to beseech you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; for certain men are secretly entered in, (who were written of long ago unto this judgment,) ungodly men, turning the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ into riotousness, and denying the only sovereign ruler and our Lord Jesus Christ."—(Prone to abominable licentiousness,) "they despise dominion and blaspheme majesty."—(Whatsoever is beyond their carnal comprehension they blaspheme,) "and what things soever they naturally know, like dumb beasts, in these they are corrupted. Wo unto them, for they have gone in to the way of Cain, and after the error of Balaam.

These are spots in their banqueting, revelling without fear, feeding themselves ; clouds without water, which are carried about by the winds ; trees of the autumn, unfruitful, twice dead, plucked up by the roots ; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion ; wandering stars, to whom the storm of darkness is reserved for ever. *These are they who separate themselves,* break off from the communion of the church to set up their own opinions and interests. “Sensual men, having not the Spirit” who dwells in peace, and loves order and subordination.

“ Little children,” says St. John, the apostle of mildness and charity, “ there are *many antichrists*, whereby we know that it is the last hour. *They went out from us, but they were not of us.* For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us ; but that they may be manifest, that they are not all of us. Many seducers *are* gone out into the world, *who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the FLESH ;*” (but, only, as a mere phantom, as *all* the Gnostics taught.) “ This (whoever teacheth this) is a seducer and *an antichrist*—whoever *revolteth* and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ,” (delivered through the church,) “ *hath not God. He that continueth in the doctrine,*” (delivered through the church,) “ *the same hath both the Father and the Son.* If any man come to you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into the house, nor say to him, ‘God speed you.’ For he that sayeth unto him, ‘God speed you,’ communicateth with his wicked works.”

The same holy evangelist receives new and stringent warnings for the churches, on this head, in the revelations made to him by our blessed Lord, in Patmos. “ And to the angel of the church of Pergamus, write: these things saith he who hath the sharp two-edged sword. I know where thou dwellest, where the seat (cathedral) of Satan is ; and thou holdest fast my name,” (notwithstanding the difficulties of the post you occupy,) “ and hast not denied my faith, even in those days when Antipas, my faithful witness (martyr), was slain among you in that abode of Satan. *But I have against thee a few things, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam ; so also hast thou them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaïtes.*”—In fine, it was to check the progress of these sects, especially the Ebionites and followers of Cerinthus, and to fortify the faithful against their seductions, that the venerable St. John, who had long survived all the other apostles, wrote his Gospel, in which he says, that the Divine Word, (the second person of the Blessed Trinity,) “ *was made flesh,*” *really, and truly,* assumed human nature.

St. Epiphanius, bishop of Salamina, in Cyprus, was induced by Acacius and Paulus, two abbots or archimandrites of Cœle-Syria, to write a history of these sects ; a task for which he was highly qualified. He had resided for a long time in the countries where they flourished most ; he was perfect master of Greek, Syriac, Hebrew, and Egyptian ; pretty well acquainted with Latin ; and, withal, a man of immense and varied erudition. (Hier. de Ser. Eccl. et adv. Ruf.)

According to him, there were cut off from the church the following heresies, which usurped the name, without professing the genuine faith of Christians:—

<p>1. Simoniani, (the sect of Simon Magus, the patriarch of antichristian heresies.)</p> <p>2. Menandriui.</p> <p>3. Saturniani.</p> <p>4. Basilidiani.</p> <p>5. Nicolaïtae.</p> <p>6. Gnostici, variously designated, being by some called Stratiotici, by others Phibonitæ, by others Secundiani, Socratitæ, Zacchei, Coddiani, Borbioriani, Barbelitæ, &c.</p> <p>7. Carpocratæ.</p> <p>8. Cerinthiani, or Mernithiani.</p> <p>9. Nazarei.</p> <p>10. Ebionitæ.</p> <p>11. Valentini.</p> <p>12. Secundiani, from whom Epiphanes and Isidorus branched off.</p> <p>13. Ptolemæi.</p> <p>14. Marcosii.</p> <p>15. Calorbasii.</p> <p>16. Heracleonitæ.</p> <p>17. Ophitæ.</p> <p>18. Caiani.</p> <p>19. Sethiani.</p> <p>20. Arcobutici.</p> <p>21. Cerdoniani.</p> <p>22. Marcionitæ.</p> <p>23. Lucianistæ.</p> <p>24. Appelleiani.</p> <p>25. Seneriani.</p> <p>26. Tatiani.</p> <p>27. Encratitæ.</p> <p>28. Cataphryges, called also Montanistæ and Tascodrugitæ, who were again subdivided among themselves.</p> <p>29. Peputiani, called also Priscilliani, to whom are to be added the Artotyritæ.</p> <p>30. Tessarescædecatitæ, who celebrated Easter on a fixed day.</p>	<p>31. Alogoi, who reject the gospel and prophecy of St. John.</p> <p>32. Adamiani.</p> <p>33. Sampsæi, called also Hellecesæi.</p> <p>34. Theodotiani.</p> <p>35. Melchisedechiani.</p> <p>36. Bordesianistæ.</p> <p>37. Noétiani.</p> <p>38. Valesii.</p> <p>39. Cathari, or Novatiani.</p> <p>40. Angelici.</p> <p>41. Apostolici.</p> <p>42. Sabelliani.</p> <p>43. Origenistæ. (According to St. Jerome, <i>contr. Rufin. Ap. Secund.</i>, St. Epiphanius had read the <i>six thousand books which Origen was said to have written!</i>)</p> <p>44. Adamantius.</p> <p>45. Followers of Paul of Samosata.</p> <p>46. Manicheans.</p> <p>47. Hieracitæ.</p> <p>48. Meletiani, Egyptian schismatics.</p> <p>49. Ariani, or Ariomanitæ.</p> <p>50. Audiani.</p> <p>51. Photiniani.</p> <p>52. Marcelliani.</p> <p>53. Semeriani.</p> <p>54. Pneumatonici, or Macedonianici, disciples of Eleugius, who blasphemed the Holy Ghost.</p> <p>55. Aériani.</p> <p>56. Aëtiani, or Anomæi, to whom is joined Eunomius.</p> <p>57. Dimaeritæ, or Apollinaristæ.</p> <p>58. Antidico-Marianitæ, or those who reviled the Blessed Virgin Mary.</p> <p>59. Collyridiani.</p> <p>60. Massaliani, with whom the Martyriani, the Euphemitæ, and Satanici, are united, &c.</p>
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He says they swarmed like a progeny of asps from the egg of the infernal serpent. Hor. 26. And in speaking of Nicoläus alone, he says that myriads of heresies were broached by his disciples:—*ἐκαστος γαρ τοιτῶν την εαυτον αἴρησιν τοὺς παθεοῖν αὐτὸν επι οπομηνος, μυριας ὄδοις επενοησε κακιας.* He attributes to them the systematic practice of the most horrible immoralities. The doctrine of the incarnation, that is, that God became man, and took a real body from the womb of Mary, was what they one and all denied. They all protested against taking the Scriptures, on that subject, in the obvious literal sense; they gave them a figurative interpretation, and said, that the Son of God had not a *real* body, but only the *appearance* of a body. In general they held a doctrine like that of the Manicheans, of a good and an evil principle: in every thing else they disagreed, and were liable to everlasting variations.

St. Epiphanius has not given any general classification of these heresies; but, from what he has recorded of their origin, tenets, and practices, it is not difficult to perceive that they were divided into two great families.

I. The judaizing heresies, of which the Nazarenes, and Ebionites, and Elxaites were the chief. It was their aim to cast the revelation announced by the apostles in the mould of their own prejudices: they wished to adopt Christianity, but they were at the same time unwilling to give up the ceremonial law; they therefore endeavoured to effect an amalgamation between the religion of the Messiah and their own sectarian systems. It is evident from the writings of St. Paul, that these principles were in great activity wherever the Jews were dispersed, even in the lifetime of the apostles; but it is probable that the grosser errors of the Ebionites, as to the two adverse deities of the Orientals, &c., were of a later date; for it is the invariable characteristic of heresy to plunge from abyss to abyss in its departure from authority. According to these sects, it was not till he was baptized in the Jordan, that the heavenly Messiah descended upon the Son of Mary and Joseph. This Messiah, the most noble of all eons or angels emanating from the Supreme Deity, forsook him at the time of the crucifixion; and, thus, they got rid of the mysteries of the incarnation and death of the Incarnate Word, to their pride and egotism a rock of scandal. They mutilated and corrupted the gospels, to suit them to their own notions.

II. While the Jewish sects would force the new revelation into conformity with the corrupt interpretations they had put upon the Mosaic law, not a few of the Gentiles, who were imbued with the Oriental and Grecian systems of philosophy, were carried away by an enthusiasm to mingle the new religion with the old theories, to illustrate the one by the other, and thereby to elicit a higher religious knowledge,—an *esoteric Christianity*,—bearing to the vulgar doctrines of the church the same analogy that the doctrines of the higher bore to those of the lower Eleusinian mysteries. They aimed at this result, in order to dispense with the submission of the intellect required by the mysteries of faith, and to retain their darling scholastic theories, while they turned the sublime and luminous

principles of the new revelation to account. This form of error, the most dangerous that could assail the church, assumed an infinite of forms: no sooner is it defeated in one guise, than it reappears in another, thus prolonging the trials of the elect from age to age. Nor has the Almighty failed to draw forth advantages from this fountain of evil also: the progressive development of religion has in a great degree arisen from its everlasting struggles against the Gnostic principle.

Asiatic Gnostics.

Saturninus, of Antioch, is one of the first Gnostic chiefs. He held the old Oriental doctrine of two principles—the one *spirit, a wise and benevolent Deity*—the other, *matter, a principle essentially evil*. “The world and its first inhabitants,” according to Saturninus, “were created by seven angels who presided over the seven planets. This they did without the knowledge of the benevolent deity, and in opposition to the will of the material principle. Their work, however, was looked upon by the former with approbation, and honoured with several marks of beneficence. He endowed with rational souls the beings who inhabited this new system, to whom their creators had merely imparted animal life; and having partitioned the world into seven regions, he assigned one to each of the seven angelic architects, of whom the God of the Jews, Jehovah, was one; reserving to himself the supreme empire over all. To these creatures, whom the benevolent deity had endowed with propensities to goodness and virtue, the evil being, to preserve a balance of power, added a malignant race inclined to wickedness; and hence the mixture of good and evil among men. But the creating spirits fell from their allegiance to the good deity, who sent into the world *a restorer of order*, whose name was Christ. This divine conqueror came clothed with a corporeal appearance, but *not with a real body*; he came to destroy the empire of the material principle, and to point out to virtuous souls the way by which they must return to God. This way is beset with difficulties and sufferings; since those souls who propose returning to the Supreme Being, after the dissolution of this mortal body, *must abstain from wine, flesh, and wedlock*, and, in short, from every thing tending to gratify the senses, or conduce to human refinement.”

Saturninus dogmatized all through Syria, but principally at Antioch, and drew after him many disciples by the pompous appearance of an extraordinary virtue.*

Bardesanians.

Bardesanes, a native of Edessa, was a man of very acute genius, and acquired a shining reputation by his writings, which were in great number, and valuable for the profound erudition they con-

* Irenæus, lib. i. cap. xxiv. Euseb. Hist. Eccl., lib. iv. cap. vii. Theodoret, Fabul. Hæret., lib. i. cap. ii. Epiphan. Hæret. xxiii.

tained. Seduced by the fantastic charms of the Oriental philosophy, he adopted it with zeal, but, at the same time, with certain modifications, that rendered his system less extravagant than that of the Marcionites, against whom he wrote a very learned treatise. The sum of his doctrine is as follows:—“There is a Supreme God, pure and benevolent, absolutely free from all evil and imperfection: and there is also a prince of darkness, the fountain of all evil, disorder, and misery. The Supreme God created the world without any mixture of evil in its composition; he also gave existence to its inhabitants, who came out of his forming hand pure and incorrupt, endued with subtile, ethereal bodies, and spirits of a celestial nature. But when, in process of time, the prince of darkness had enticed men to sin, then the Supreme God permitted them to fall into sluggish and gross bodies formed of corrupt matter by the evil principle: he permitted also the depravation and disorder which this malignant being introduced both in the natural and in the moral world, designing, by this permission, to punish the degeneracy and rebellion of an apostate race; and hence proceeds the perpetual conflict between reason and passion in the mind of man. It was on this account that Jesus descended from the upper regions, clothed *not with a real, but a celestial and aerial body*, and taught mankind to subdue that body of corruption which they carry about with them in this mortal life.” This sect subsisted a long time in Syria.*

Tatianists.

Tatian, by birth an Assyrian, and a disciple of Justin Martyr, is more distinguished by the ancient writers on account of his genius and learning, and the excessive and incredible austerities of his life and manners, than by any errors or opinions peculiar to himself, which he taught as follows:—*He regarded matter as the fountain of all evil, evil in itself, and on that account he practised and preached the mortification of the body.* He distinguished between the Creator of the world and the Supreme Being; denied the reality of Christ’s body; and corrupted Christianity with several other tenets of orientalism. His moral code resembled that of the Marcionites, &c., and so rigidly prohibited wine, that his followers used nothing but water even in the celebration of the Eucharist. They were called Encratites, or temperate Apolactites, or renouncers, Hydroparastates or water-drinkers. This sect was very numerous.†

The Ebionites.

Among the foregoing, who were all Asiatic Gnostics, may be classed the Ebionites, who, although a Jewish sect, coincide in most of the gross errors of the others. Though professing to believe the celestial mission of Christ, and his participation of a divine nature,

* See, besides, the writers who give accounts of the ancient heresies, Euseb. Hist. Eccl., lib. iv. cap. xxx.; Beausobre, Hist. du Manich., vol. ii. p. 128.

† Vid. Clem. Alexan. Stromat., l. iii. p. 460. Epiphan. Hæres., xlvi. 1.

yet they regarded him as a pure mortal, born of Joseph and Mary. They maintained that the ceremonial law was binding on all ; and the observance of it essential to salvation. They went still farther, regarding the rabbinical fables and corrupt glosses of the Pharisees in the same light.*

The Egyptian Gnostics.

The Egyptian were distinguished from the Asiatic Gnostics by the following differences in their religious system :—

1. Although, besides the existence of a Deity, they maintained that also of an eternal matter, endued with life and motion, yet they did not acknowledge an eternal principle of darkness, or the evil principle of the Persians.

2. They supposed our blessed Saviour to be a compound of two persons, of the man Jesus, and of Christ the Son of God ; *that the divine person entered into the man Jesus when he was baptized by John in the River Jordan, and departed from him when he was seized by the Jews.* Still, to avoid the *incomprehensible* dogma of the incarnation,

3. They were not agreed as to whether Christ had *a real body or not.*

4. As to their moral code ; it was licentious in the highest degree. Carpocrates not only allowed his disciples a full liberty to sin, but recommended to them a vicious course of life as a matter both of obligation and necessity ; asserting that eternal salvation was attainable by those who had committed all sorts of crimes, and had daringly filled up the measure of iniquity. Similar views were propagated by Basilides.

The Valentinians.

Valentinian was likewise an Egyptian by birth. His sect grew into a state of consistence in the isle of Cyprus, and from thence diffused itself through Asia, Africa, and Europe with astonishing rapidity. His principles, generally speaking, resembled those of the other Gnostics ; but like each of the other founders of sects, he had many blasphemous errors of his own peculiar invention. “The Creator of the world,” according to Valentinian, “arrived by degrees to that pitch of arrogance, that he either imagined himself to be God alone, or, at least, was desirous that mankind should consider him as such. For this purpose he sent forth prophets to the Jewish nation to declare his claim to the honour that is due to the Supreme Being ; and in this also the other angels that preside over the different parts of the universe, immediately set themselves to imitate his ambition. To chastise this lawless arrogance of Demiurge, and to illuminate the minds of rational beings with the knowledge of the Supreme Deity, Christ appeared upon earth, composed of an animal

* Vid. Irenæus, l. i. conf. Hæres, cap. xxvi. Epiphan. Hæres. xxx.

and spiritual substance, *and clothed moreover with an aerial body*. Jesus, one of the supreme *æons*, was substantially united to him, when he was baptized by John in the waters of Jordan. The Creator of this world when he found that the foundations of his empire were shaken by this Divine man, caused him to be apprehended and nailed to the cross. But before Christ submitted to this punishment, not only Jesus, the Son of God, but also the rational soul of Christ, ascended up on high, *so that only the animal soul and the ethereal body suffered crucifixion.*"

This wild dreamer and impious heretic became renowned, drew multitudes after him, and, as usual, his brood gave birth to numerous sects still more odious than their parent. The Ptolemaites (from their chief, Ptolemy) differed with Valentinian as to the number of the *æons*. The Secundians (from Secundus, their chief) maintained, in contradiction to his master, the two eternal principles of the Persians. From the same source arose the sect of Heracleon; also that of the Marcosians, whose leaders Mark and Calobarsus, added many new absurdities to the fictions of Valentinian;* besides a multitude of other obscure sects—such as the Adamites, who professed to imitate the state of primitive innocence; the Cainites, who worshipped as saints, Cain, Cora, Dathan, the inhabitants of Sodom, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed his Divine Master. Equally impious and insane were the doctrines of the Abelites, the Sethites, the Flarinians, and the Blasts—so called from their head, Blastus.

Grecian Gnostics.

The Christian doctrine concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the two natures united in our blessed Saviour, were not to be reconciled with the philosophic theories of Greece. When, therefore, its sages began to feel like the whole world, the irresistible progress of Christianity, they set about explaining away its mysteries, in order to render them less repugnant to their own notions. Praxeas, one of the first to dogmatize in this style, denied the distinction of the divine persons; hence, his followers were called Monarchians: they were called Patropassians, because, according to Tertullian's account, they believed that the Father was so identified with the man Christ, his Son, that he suffered with him the anguish of an afflicted life, and the torments of an ignominious death. Artemon and Theodotus differed from Praxeas on this point, teaching, "that, at the birth of the man Christ, a certain divine energy, or portion of the divine nature (and not the person of the Father, as Praxeas imagined,) united itself to him." Their disciples applied the dictates of philosophy, and even the science of geometry, to explain the Christian religion. A like attachment to the dictates of a presumptuous philosophy, induced Hermogenes, a painter by profession, to abandon the doctrine of the church concerning the origin of the world and the nature of the soul. Re-

* Vid. Iræn. contr. Hæres., l. i. cap. xiv.

garding matter as the fountain of all evil, he could not persuade himself that God had created it from nothing by an almighty act of his will ; and therefore he maintained, that the world, with whatever it contains, as also the souls of men and other spirits, were formed by the Deity from an uncreated and eternal mass of corrupt matter. The work of Tertullian in refutation of the errors of this heretic concerning the soul, has perished ; that written against his errors concerning matter and the origin of the world, is still extant.

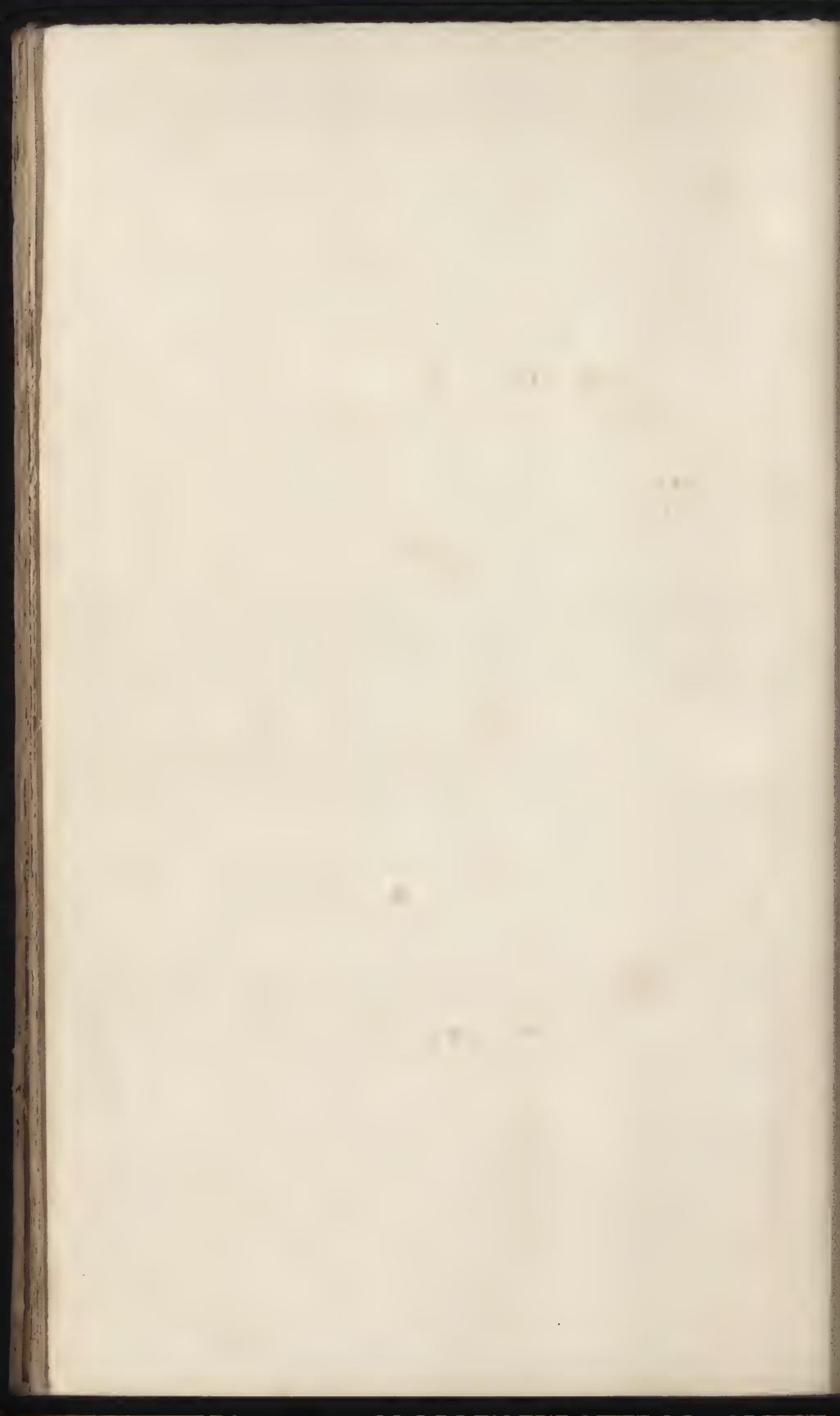
The Montanists.

These sects, which we have been passing in review, were Gnostics, or the offspring of philosophical presumption. Montanus, a native of Pepuza in Phrygia, was an ignorant fanatic or impostor, who pretended to the world that he was himself the Paraclete whom the Divine Saviour had promised to send in order to comfort and teach his disciples all truth. Notwithstanding the impious absurdity of these pretensions, Montanus had many followers, and these not of the lowest order, either as to rank or intellect, as may be judged from the fact, that Priscilla and Maximilla, two renowned prophetesses of the sect, were far more remarkable for their opulence than their virtue ; and that the great Tertullian, so formidable to heresy, so long as he remained obedient to the church, became the champion of this insane fanaticism, which spread through many countries of Europe, Africa, and Asia.*

Each of these sects pretended to find its own peculiar system in the Scriptures. They quoted them flippantly ; put that construction on the text that suited their own fancy ; they adulterated the Scriptures ; rejected whatever parts they could by no ingenuity reconcile with their theories ; and dealt in forgery to such a degree, that there were upwards of fifty spurious gospels in circulation when St. Jerome wrote.† The apostolic writings cannot possibly be understood without an acquaintance with these primitive forms of heresy. To them, incessant allusion is made, particularly by St. Paul ; against them, the apostolic denunciations are aimed ; for *they* would substitute “the deceits of vain philosophy,” for “the faith once delivered to the saints ;” *they* would introduce “the religion of angels,” or eons, emanations of Divinity, without end—an invariable portion of the Gnostic systems ; *they* “prohibited to marry ;” *they* made “distinction of meats,” as if all had not been created by the good God, but were the productions of the author of evil ; the grand dogma to be enforced against *them* was the reality and all-sufficiency of Jesus, whom *they* regarded as having not a *real*, but only a *figurative* body. The Catholic church refuted them all by clinging to apostolical tradition, as has been shown in the text.

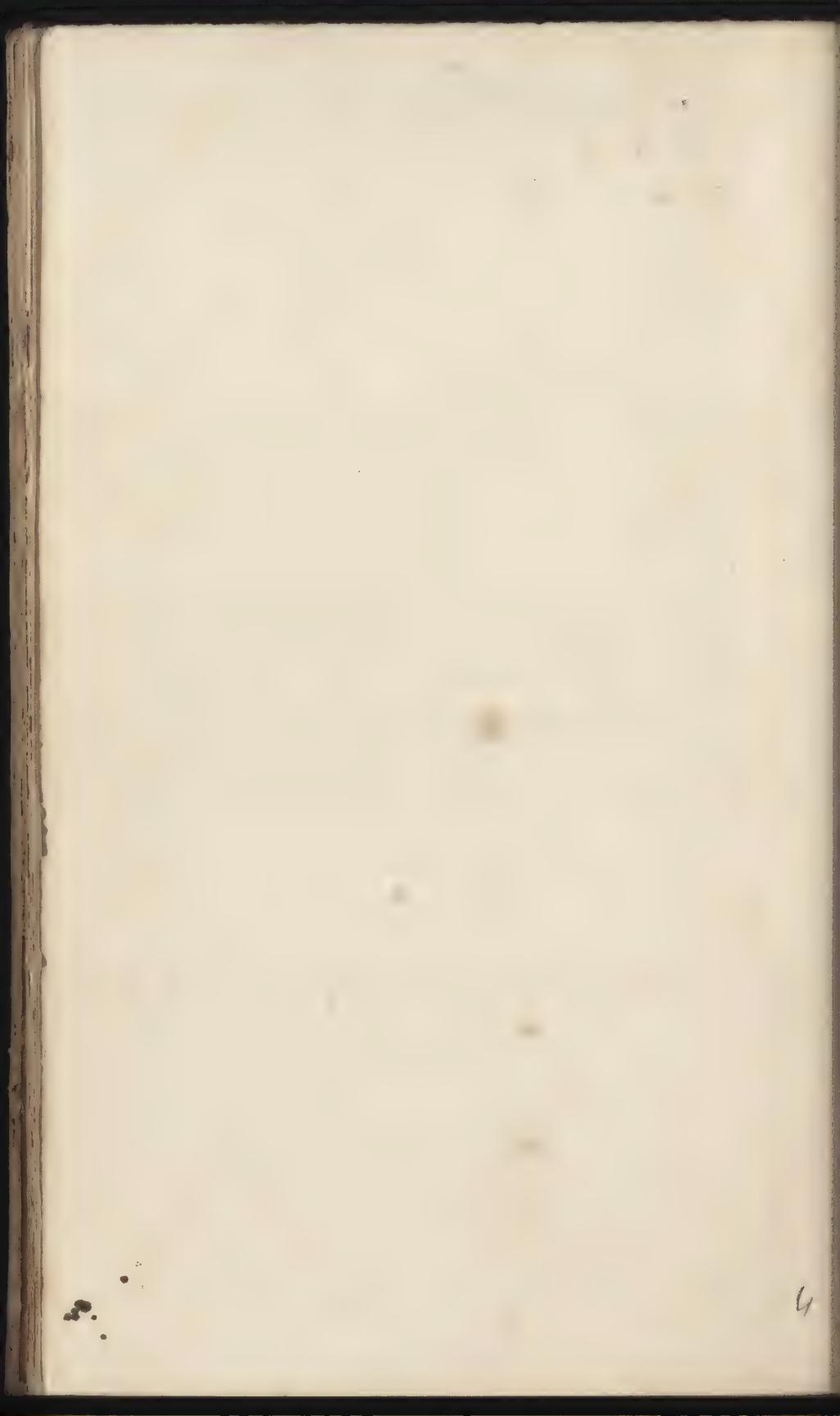
* Vid. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. 16 ; and Mosheim, Hist. Eccl., who have been generally followed in the sketches of the heresiarchs.

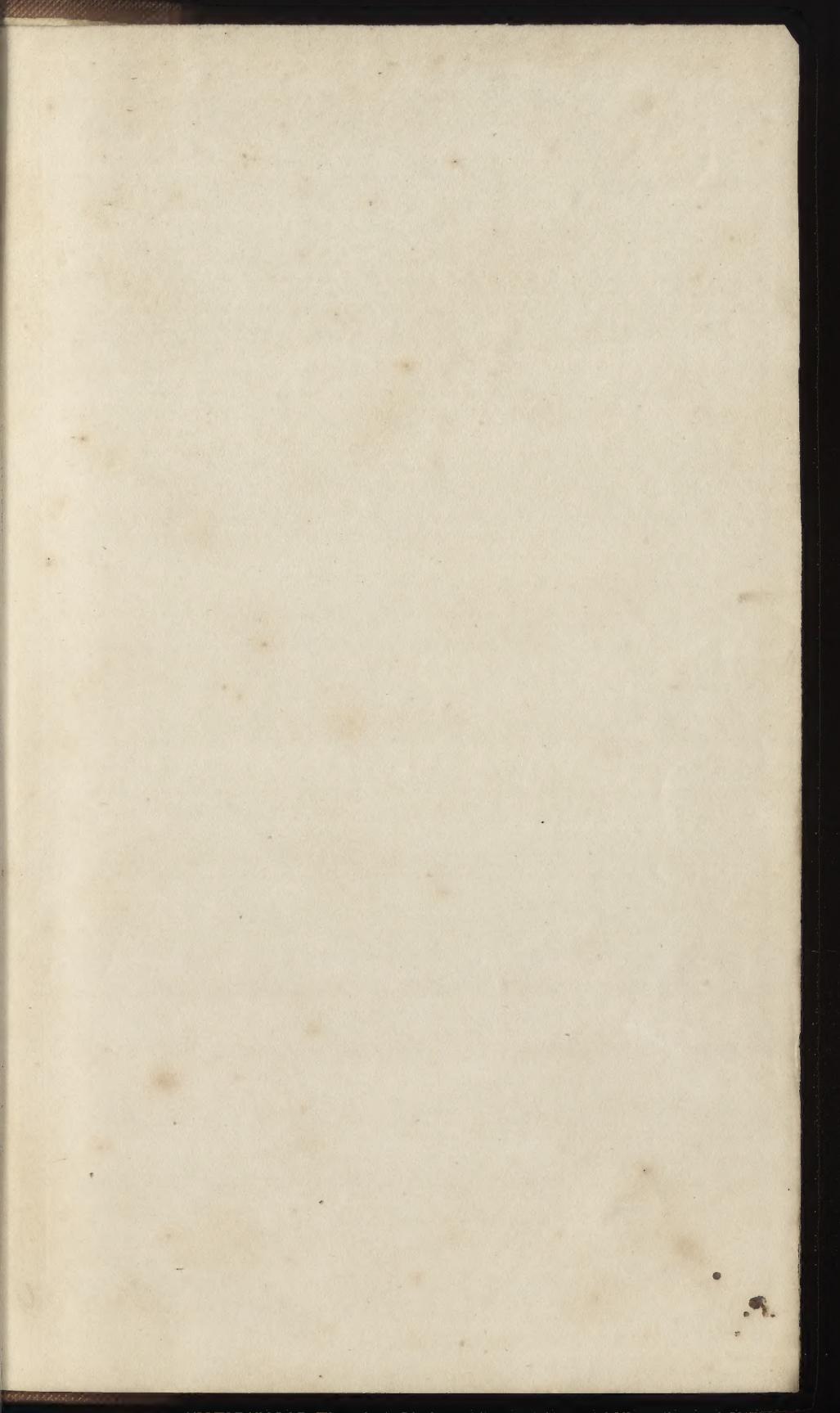
† Proem. in S. Matt.

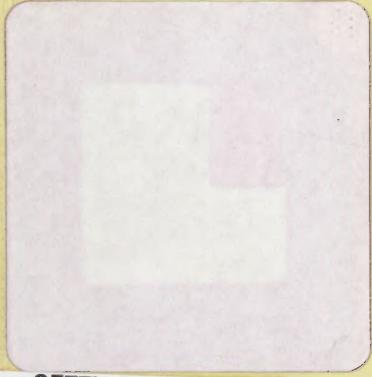


ERRATUM.

Vol. I. p. 172, line 1st of note. For *forty* read *four hundred*.







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